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CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

THE LIFE
OF
CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

FROM AUTHENTIC SPANISH AND ITALIAN DOCUMENTS.

COMPILED FROM THE FRENCH OF
ROSELLY DE LORGUES.

BY J. J. BARRY, M.D.

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DEDICATION.

To the Right Honorable the Marquis of Bute:

MY LORD MARQUIS,—

As a tribute to your recent conversion to the Catholic faith, I take the liberty of dedicating to you this version of the Life of one of your co-religionists, than whom you cannot, for your future imitation, find a more perfect model, short of the acknowledged Saints of the Church; for Columbus is a model for all Christian men, and particularly for those in high stations.

And the fact that he has not long since been enrolled among the canonized Saints shows how extremely exacting (if I may use the expression) Rome is on the subjects of heroic piety and virtue, and even miracles, previously to conferring that ineffable honor.

With sentiments of the highest consideration, I have the unspeakable honor, and happiness to be, my Lord,

One of your fellow-Catholics,

J. J. B.

(iii)

203223

PREFACE.

THE work now offered to the public is a kind of compilation from the larger work of M. DE LORGUES, entitled "Christopher Columbus.—The History of his Life and his Voyages, etc."* But it may be proper to state here that having met with a few inaccuracies, typographical or otherwise, in the original, I have taken occasion to correct them in this work. Again, I found a few *lacunæ*, which I considered it proper to fill up from my own researches. Further, in some cases, where I considered M. De Lorgues did not use the happiest terms to express certain ideas, I have resorted to ones that appeared to

* Christophe Colomb. — *Histoire de sa Vie et de ses Voyages d'après des Documents authentiques tirés d'Espagne et d'Italie*, par Roselly de Lorgues, in 2 vols. Paris, Dedier et C^{ie}, 1864.

me more appropriate. Under these circumstances, and remembering that in many cases I had to condense the matter of some pages into almost as many lines, this work could not be expected to be a translation, strictly so called, though in truth the far greater part of it is such.

In order to economize the space at my disposal, I have been obliged to omit several of the authorities quoted by the author. For the same reason, I have only glanced at the occurrences in Hispaniola over which Columbus could have had no control.

M. de Lorgues' History contains the details and events of the Voyages of Columbus, as well as those of his Life; but the object of the present work being to reproduce his Life, the Voyages, with the exception of the first, and the return one, have been much curtailed, save so far as they have a bearing on his personal acts and character. It is for this reason that the word *Voyages* has been omitted in the title of the book. The plan I have followed has enabled me to reproduce, as far as it could be done from De Lorgues' History, what I may

call a full length, and, I trust, a life-like portrait of the immortal Discoverer of America, who, it is to be hoped, will ere long be solemnly enrolled on the glorious catalogue of the canonized Saints.

For obvious reasons I have added the initial of my surname to some notes I have appended.

It may further be proper to state that the Table of Contents in this volume will be found much more ample than the one in the original work.

J. J. B.

CONTENTS.

DEDICATION.
PREFACE.

PAGE

INTRODUCTION.

Errors inevitable until the present time in regard to the person, the civil *status*, and the character of Columbus. — Sympathies of the Holy See. — Prejudices caused by Protestant writers. — Exposure of the calumny in regard to Columbus and his wife Doña Beatrix Enriquez. — A new history of this hero of Catholicity needed **I**

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

Time and place of the birth of Columbus. — *Status* of his family. — His childhood and education. — His first services on sea. — His accidental landing in Portugal **47**

CHAPTER II.

Stay of Columbus in Lisbon. — His marriage with the daughter of a navigator. — His voyages to the Canaries, the Azores and the African coasts. — His propositions of discovery to Genoa, to Venice, to Portugal. — Offers of the King. — His noble refusal. — His return to Italy. — His departure for Spain **59**

CHAPTER III.

Influence of Isabella on the destinies of Spain **82**

(ix)

CHAPTER IV.

- Arrival of Columbus at the Franciscan convent of La Rabida.
 — The friendship between the Father Superior and him. —
 He sets out for the Court 84

CHAPTER V.

- Sojourn of Columbus in Cordova. — He marries Beatrix Enriquez. — The support of the clergy procures for him an audience with the Sovereigns. — His useless solicitations. — The conferences at Salamanca. — He serves at the siege of Baza. — The Superior of La Rabida again comes to aid him 92

CHAPTER VI.

- The War in Granada. — Surrender of the City. — The project of Columbus discussed. — Deception. — Columbus starts for France; the Queen recalls him, and orders preparations to be made for his voyage. — The equipment. — The Father Superior again assists him. — Departure of Columbus with three ships 114

CHAPTER VII.

- Events of the voyage. — Fears of the sailors. — New aspects of the ocean. — Variation of the mariner's compass. — A conspiracy and a revolt. — Firmness of Columbus. — His prediction of the Discovery 138

CHAPTER VIII.

- The island of San Salvador. — The archipelago of the Lucaya or Bahama islands. — Searchings for gold. — The island of Cuba. — Discovery of Hispaniola. — Hospitality of King Guacanagari. — First settlement of Europeans in the Antilles 158

CHAPTER IX.

- Departure of Columbus for Europe. — Navigation distressing. — Danger, and vows during a tempest. — Arrival at the Azores. — Perfidy of the Portuguese Governor. — A new tempest. — Forced landing in Portugal 201

CONTENTS.

xi

CHAPTER X.

PAGE

Honors rendered to Columbus by the people and the Court. —
The Council of State proposes to assassinate him. — The
King honors and protects him. — The Queen desires to see
him 212

CHAPTER XI.

Arrival of Columbus at Palos. — His reunion with the Father
Superior of La Rabida; his stay at the convent. — His
departure for the Court. — His triumphal reception at Bar-
celona. — Action of the Holy See in relation to Columbus.
— The story of the egg 217

CHAPTER XII.

Preparations for the second expedition. — The first bureau of
the colonies. — The Father Superior of La Rabida embarks
with Columbus 251

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

His departure. — His arrival at the Canaries. — He determines
to consecrate to the Blessed Virgin the first lands he will
discover, and directs his course to the Caribbees. — The
second of December he announces that land will be discov-
ered the next day, which becomes a fact. — Diego Marquez
wanders in the land of the cannibals. — Dominica, Guada-
loupe, Montserrat, Antigua, Santa Cruz, St. Ursula, and
the Eleven Thousand Virgins 259

CHAPTER II.

Ruin of the garrison left at Hayti. — Guacanagari suspected.
— Founding of the City of Isabella. — Unknown diseases 268

CHAPTER III.

Europeans disappointed in their hopes. — Fraud of the pur-
veyors of the marine. — Conspiracy against Columbus. —
Revolt. — Enmity of the Vicar-apostolic towards Columbus 279

CHAPTER IV.

Voyage to Cuba. — Discovery of Jamaica. — The Queen's Gardens. — Periodical Storms. — He desires to crush the power of the Caribs. — Columbus falls into a lethargy. — Bull of Partition. — Treaty of Tordesillas. — Wonderful firmness of Pope Alexander VI. 289

CHAPTER V.

Columbus meets his brother Bartholomew. — Prompt recovery of the Admiral. — He receives the first letter that is sent from Europe. — Supplies received. — Excesses committed in his absence; odious conduct of Pedro Margarit and of Father Boil. — General conspiracy of the caciques. — Fidelity of Guacanagari, through regard for Columbus. — Cause of the sterility of the missions. — Father Boil and Father Boyl 308

CHAPTER VI.

Columbus tries to break the league of the caciques. — Caonabo is captured. — Combat of two hundred and twenty Spaniards against ten thousand natives. — The famine plot 322

CHAPTER VII.

Complaints made to the Court against Columbus and his brothers. — Don Diego Columbus comes to Spain. — Chicanery of the Board of Marine. — The bureaucratic bishop, Don Juan de Fonseca. — Diego Columbus returns to Hispaniola. — Ingratitude of Aguado. — First hurricane . . . 328

CHAPTER VIII.

Gold mines discovered. — Departure of Columbus for Spain with the sick and Indians. — Romantic devotedness of a cannibal princess for Caonabo. — To save provisions the crew want to cast the Indians into the sea, but they are protected by the Admiral. — He predicts the very day when they will reach land 337

CONTENTS.

xiii

CHAPTER IX.

PAGE

Columbus wears publicly the habit of the Franciscans.—He goes to Court.—At the sight of him the Queen forgets all the accusations brought against him.—Measures taken in favor of the colonies.—Columbus refuses a principality.—He establishes a Majorat, or Mayorazgo.—Outrages received when entering on his third voyage. . . . 345

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

Columbus takes a new route for his third voyage.—Dead calms of the torrid zone.—The heat spoils the provisions, etc.—Excessive thirst makes him change his course.—Island of Trinidad descried.—Discovery of the new continent.—The Orinoco.—The Gulf of Paria.—Happy escape from dangers.—Departs for Hispaniola 365

CHAPTER II.

His speculations in relation to the places he had visited.—His discovery of the Equatorial Swelling.—His ideas about the terrestrial Paradise.—His discovery of the great Equatorial Current.—Great scientific conquests result from this voyage.—Arrives at the Island of Beata, where his brother Bartholomew comes to meet him 376

CHAPTER III.

Events that occurred in Hispaniola during the Admiral's absence.—He forbids bad Christians from working in the mines.—Discontent of the Castilians.—The Adelantado goes to Xaragua.—Revolts 382

CHAPTER IV.

Proclamation of the Viceroy.—Permission given the malcontents to return to Spain.—Promises of pardon.—Defection of the troops.—He cannot resort to force.—Humiliations he has to endure.—Carvajal brings Roldan to an arrangement with the Viceroy 388

CHAPTER V.

The chiefs of the rebels cannot control them.—Arrival of Ojeda, who comes to patronize the rebels.—Simultaneous revolt of the natives.—Columbus, abandoned, and on the point of flying to sea from his enemies, is miraculously aided.—Voluntary submission of the chiefs of the rebels.—Order is reëstablished and prosperity commences 396

CHAPTER VI.

The enemies of Columbus in Seville.—Secret hostility of Ferdinand.—A commissary is appointed.—Bobadilla is invested with extraordinary powers.—Indians sold as slaves.—Isabella annuls the sales, and orders the Indians to be restored to liberty 406

CHAPTER VII.

Arrival of Bobadilla at San Domingo.—He besieges the fortress, and sets the prisoners at liberty.—He seizes on the papers and effects of the Admiral, who was then absent.—He imprisons Columbus and his two brothers.—He sends them, in chains, to Spain 408

CHAPTER VIII.

The Queen grieved at the indignity offered to Columbus.—His arrival at Court.—Ovando appointed to supersede Bobadilla.—Columbus occupies himself with the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre.—He composes religious poems, and a compilation from the Scriptures, entitled “Book of the Prophecies” 418

CHAPTER IX.

The real motives of Columbus for undertaking the fourth voyage.—Before his departure he indicates, in an unfinished chart to the Queen, the Isthmus of Panama.—Don Bartholomew accompanies him through affection alone.—Columbus writes to the Holy Father, and informs him of his project to deliver the Holy Sepulchre.—His precautions against the enmity of Ferdinand 434

CONTENTS.

XV

PAGE

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER I.

Columbus departs with four ships. — He succors the Portuguese fortress of Arcilla, besieged by the Moors. — The Governor of Hispaniola opposes his entrance into the port. — Columbus predicts a violent tempest, and begs the Governor to delay the fleet that was about to sail for Spain. — His prediction is sneered at, but the tempest comes and the fleet perishes. — Judgment of God visible. — Columbus, with his ships, preserved 441

CHAPTER II.

Columbus discovers *terra firma* near Cape Caxinas. — Atmospheric contrarieties. — Sufferings of the crews. — A disaster. — The Island of Quiribi. — Search for a strait at Chagres. — The Isthmus of Panama 458

CHAPTER III.

Columbus has a terrible struggle with the elements. — Globular lightnings. — A frightful water-spout. — Columbus, almost dying, is roused by the cries of the sailors; he invokes his Divine Master, and conjures the water-spout. — He forms a settlement on the Rio Belen. — The Indian Chief prepares to destroy the Spaniards. — The Adelantado captures the Chief in the midst of his people 464

CHAPTER IV.

The natives attack the Spanish camp. — The crew of a long-boat is massacred. — The Admiral cannot go to their relief on account of the extreme roughness of the sea. — His extreme sadness. — He has a miraculous vision. — Departure for Hispaniola, and forced landing at Queen's Gardens. — Arrival in Jamaica, where the vessels are stranded in the Bay of Santa Gloria 475

CHAPTER V.

Columbus writes a letter to the Sovereigns, which he cannot send but by a miracle. — Diego Mendez undertakes to be the bearer. — Mendez is marvellously aided by Providence, and finally arrives in Hispaniola in a canoe. — This voyage a truly miraculous one. — Revolt of the brothers Porras against the Admiral 486

CHAPTER VI.

The insurgents, in imitation of Diego Mendez, want to pass to Hispaniola. — Three times they make the attempt, and as often they are repelled by the sea. — They plunder the habitations of the Indians, and try to excite them against the Admiral. — The Indians determined to starve out the strangers. — Anxiety of Columbus. — He addresses himself to God, who inspires him with the idea of utilizing the approaching eclipse of the moon 497

CHAPTER VII.

The rebels attack the Admiral. — They are defeated by the Adelantado, who makes their chief a prisoner. — Columbus receives some aid, and returns to Hispaniola. — He departs for Spain. — Successive tempests. — Providentially aided, he arrives at San Lucar 507

CHAPTER VIII.

Columbus sojourns in Seville. — Sickness and death of Isabella. — Unspeakable grief of Columbus at her death. — His sickness, poverty, and moral sufferings. — From his bed he counteracts an intrigue of Fonseca in Rome. — Fruitless reclamations of Columbus before Ferdinand. — He nobly rejects an offer made him by the King. 514

CHAPTER IX.

His disease becomes worse. — He sees his end is approaching. — He deposits his will in the hands of the notary of the Court. — Errors of historians and biographers in regard to the date of this will, and of the order relative to Doña Beatrix Enriquez. — He receives the last sacraments. — His last Words. — He dies on Ascension-Day. — Posthumous Voyages of Columbus 532

CHAPTER X.

The private life of Columbus. — His public life a model for administrators. — Providential character of Columbus. — His Christian mission and relations with the Church. — His Spiritual Affinities. — The Legend of St. Christopher. — His affinities with the patriarchs, the prophets, and the apostles. — Similitude of Moses and Columbus. — Of the sanctity of Columbus. — Testimonies of the Most High in favor of His servant. — Public miracles of a cross that was erected by Columbus 547

ADDENDUM 619

INTRODUCTION.

Errors inevitable until the present time in regard to the Person, the Civil Status, and the Character of Columbus. — Sympathies of the Holy See. — Prejudices caused by Protestant Writers. — Exposure of the Calumny in regard to Columbus and his Wife, Doña Beatrix Enriquez. — A new History of this Hero of Catholicity needed.

SECTION I.

ON Ascension Day, the twentieth of May, 1506, in an inn at Valladolid, the Viceroy of the Indies, the great Admiral of the Ocean, Don CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, assisted by some Franciscan priests, and surrounded by his two sons and seven officers of his household, rendered his soul back to God.

The death of the man who had doubled the known span of the earth appeared to leave no void, to cause no sadness. In the city it did not seem to be an event, much less a loss, for Spain, where it occasioned neither noise nor sensation; and it remained completely ignored abroad. At that moment public attention was engrossed by the arrival of Princess Jane, daughter of Isabella the Catholic, coming, accompanied by her consort, the Archduke Philip of Austria, to take possession of the Kingdom of Castile, which had become her heritage. All the grandees had set out to meet the august sovereigns, having learned their landing at Corunna, after the perilous incidents of a passage interrupted by a kind of shipwreck on the coast of England. The enthusiasm was general. The devoted brother of

Christopher Columbus, Don Bartholomew, was obliged, in the interest of his nephews, to quit the sick-bed of the patient, to go in his name to compliment the new sovereigns.

The conjugal contestations that frequently arose between the young sovereigns, the misunderstanding that was said to separate the Catholic King from his son-in-law, the dissensions in the palace, the parties that were formed there, the disquietude about the future which these conflicts had prepared, — preoccupying all minds, — caused the fate of Columbus to be lost sight of. Moreover, it was a long time known that the Admiral of the Ocean had fallen under the displeasure of the King, and had therefore retired from the Court. Isolation had surrounded him before his last hour, and his death remained unnoticed. The man who had bestowed on Spain one-half of this globe obtained neither honors, nor a funeral oration, nor a monument, nor an epitaph!

Such was the indifference of the public in regard to Columbus, that a Lombardian literary character, Peter Martyr d'Anghierra, — who had formerly boasted of his familiarity with the great man, and who had removed to Spain, hoping, as he said, his name would be transmitted to posterity if he should write the first events of the Discovery, — did not deign to mention that death. And even the Chronicle of Valladolid, which from the year 1333 had minutely registered every event of local interest, — the building of churches, of schools, births and marriages of note, fires, criminal executions, installations of bishops, nominations of aldermen, — did not think that this death merited being registered in its annals. It was because that already, as regarded Columbus, the silence of forgetfulness preceded that of the tomb. Nobody was interested about his death. His glorious but unheeded remains were piously deposited by his only friends, the Franciscans, in their convent at Valladolid.

Nevertheless, at the end of seven years, Ferdinand having altered his mind, and wishing to leave to history an example

of his royal gratitude, remembered the man who had so magnificently enlarged the grandeur of Spain. He ordered that obsequies for the deceased should be celebrated conformably to his rank of High Admiral. His coffin was exhumed from the convent of St. Francis, and transported to the cathedral of Seville, where, at the expense of the sovereign, a solemn service was performed; after which the body was deposited in the vaults of the convent of Las Cuevas, in the newly-constructed chapel of Christ. On the mortuary-stone was engraved, in two verses, the legend of his arms; and then all was said and done.

Columbus, providentially come from Italy to Spain, was there considered a foreigner, notwithstanding his letters of naturalization. He did not leave there, in dying, any powerful alliance who could espouse the interests of his glory and of his posterity. During nine years, the route boldly opened by his genius across the "Gloomy Ocean," until then dreaded and believed impassable, was ploughed by able and lucky adventurers. Numerous discoveries had succeeded to his. The easy successes of the present caused men to forget the toilsome labors of the past, better known by its wonders than by its riches. New stars arose in the horizon of fame. The discoveries of the Portuguese in the East, and the navigation of the Castilians in the West Indies, brought to notice unknown names. Since Vasco de Gama had doubled the Cape of Tempests, discovered Mozambique, Melinda, Guzarat, and established settlements at Cochin and at Cananor, in another direction, under the flag of Castile, Vincent Yañes Pinzon had crossed the equinoctial line. Whilst the submission of Madagascar and of Soccotora, the discovery of Sumatra and of Malacca, and the conquest of Goa spread afar the glory of the Portuguese arms, a new ardor animated the ports of Spain, and hastened the attempts of establishing colonies on the new continent, on the Gulf of Uraba, of Darien, at Porto Bello; and led to the discovery of Florida by Juan Ponce de Leon, soon followed by that of the Pacific Ocean, by the intrepid Vasco

Núñez de Balboa. In the midst of these triumphs who could have thought of Columbus?

During two consecutive years his oldest son had in vain solicited from King Ferdinand the investiture of the posts and dignities of his father, conformably to the text of the conventions signed the seventeenth of April, 1497, in the plain of Granada, ratified the twenty-third of April, 1497, and confirmed at Valencia by letter royal the fourteenth of March, 1502. All that he could at last obtain of the jealous monarch was the authorization to establish his rights according to law. But in this process, which he instituted against the Crown of Castile, Don Diego Columbus encountered as defendant the public minister, called the Fiscal Attorney. The latter, in the interest of the Crown, opened inquiries to which all the enemies of Columbus, — the ungrateful, the envious, and the officers who were rebellious to his authority, — were invited to depose against his glory. The Fiscal Attorney opposed to the claims of Diego, that his father had never rendered to Castile any eminent service, and that he was not the true author of the Discoveries. He was accused of having despoiled of his plan, his charts, his observations, an unknown pilot, who might have died at his house when he lived in the Portuguese island of Porto-Santo; and of having, by means of this almost sacrilegious spoliation, executed his enterprise. It was, moreover, asserted, that if he had discovered some islands, he was not the first who had landed on *Terra Firma*, — the new continent. Thus were reproduced, sustained, and renewed all the old calumnies which, during his life, envy had sown in his path as a consequence of his triumph.

While these inquiries were being prosecuted, a Florentine, Amerigo Vespucci, a man of letters and a mathematician, came to be nominated president of the commission for inquiry into naval affairs. At first, being first clerk in the important house of the maritime expedition which his countryman, Juanato Berardi, had founded in Seville, and therefore in assiduous relations with Columbus, he imbibed,

from his conversations with him, a liking for cosmography and for distant wonders. Amerigo quitted the counter for the astrolabe and the sextant, and made several voyages; after which he became pilot-major. At a later period, he was placed at the head of the hydrographic council. In his youth, his uncle, George Anthony Vespucci, a learned religious of St. Mark, charged with the education of several children of illustrious blood, had associated him in their studies. His style of writing being graceful and diffuse, Amerigo, after his studies, continued to correspond with several of his old fellow-students, who attained high positions in Europe. The description of the voyages he made to these new countries, addressed by him to the Duke René de Lorraine, to Lorenzo de Pier Francesco de Medicis, and to the gonfalonier of Florence, Pietro Soderini, was echoed aloud. In one of his "Four Narrations," some vague and ambiguous expressions he used, led to the belief that he was the first who had seen *terra firma*. He seems to have given to these new countries the name of the New World.

Nevertheless, nobody hitherto had bestowed a name on the continent discovered by Columbus. The Discovery having been made under the auspices of the Cross, and for the triumph of the Cross, this new land was indicated on charts by the sign and name of the Cross. The continent was at first called "LAND OF THE HOLY CROSS, or *New World*." The celebrated edition made in Rome of the *Geography of Ptolemy*, by Marc de Benevent and Jean Cotta de Vérone, in 1608, reproduced Ruysch's Map of the World, in which the new continent was designated by these words: "TERRA SANCTÆ CRUCIS, *sive Mundus Novus*."* But during this time, the Narration of Amerigo Vespucci, already published at Vicenza, was, the preceding year, republished at Milan; and, without desiring

* The edition of Ptolemy, printed in Venice, in 1511, by Jacobus Pentius de Leucho, with charts graven on wood, designated also the new continent by these words in red capitals: "TERRA SANCTÆ CRUCIS."

it, France came to take away forever from Columbus the honor of having his name bestowed on the New World of which he was the discoverer.

A Lorraine geographer, living in Saint-Dié, had published, under the fictitious name of "Martinus Hylacomilus," a work on cosmography, followed by the "Four Narrations of Voyages" by Amerigo Vespucci.* This publication, which was entitled, "AN INTRODUCTION TO COSMOGRAPHY," edited at Saint-Dié, printed at first in that city in 1507, and republished at Strasburg in 1509, was dedicated to the Emperor Maximilian. The author, Martin Waldsemüller, does not mention Christopher Columbus's name once in it, and appears to have had no knowledge even of his existence. He loudly attributed the discovery of the new continent to the genius of Amerigo, whose name he Latinized *Americus*. In his admiration for the sagacity of Americus, the cosmographer of Saint-Dié declared he did not see what right there was in not giving to the New World the name of Americus, who discovered it, and calling it *America*, since usage has rendered feminine the names of Europe and of Asia.† The high reputation of this work facilitated the adoption of the name proposed by Waldsemüller. It can be seen in the edition of Jean Gruniger, in 1509, that the first copy of the "Narrations of the Four Voyages" by Vespucci, first written in Spanish, then translated into Portuguese, was rendered into Italian, from which it was translated into French. Soon afterwards, from French it was reproduced in Latin, which caused it to become European. This great notoriety prepared the acquiescence of the public in the unjust name which was proposed by the geographer of Saint-Dié.

We are, alas! obliged to acknowledge that it was

* *Cosmographia Introductio*, etc., 1507 and 1509.

† "Non video cur quis vetet ab Americo inventore sagacis ingenii viro *Amerigem* quasi Americi terram, sive *Americam* ducendam, cum et Europa et Asia a mulieribus sua sortita sint nomina."—*Cosmographia Introductio*, cap. ix.

France that first inscribed the name of America (*Amérique*) on its geographical charts. The oldest charts printed at Lyons bear the name of *Amérique*, as designating the New World. Such was the chart of 1522, engraven on wood, which was joined to the edition of Ptolemy in the shops of Melchoir and Gaspard Frechs^{el}.* Such, also, was the one published in 1541, by Hugues de Portes.

The Protestant presses of Germany were not slow, through envy, in giving currency to this usurpation. The apostate monk, Sebastian Munster, author of "The Introduction to a Table of Cosmography," spread the name of *America* by the press of Basle. In another direction, Joachim Vadianus, in his "Universal Cosmography," printed at Zurich, in 1548, propagated the name "America." Florence welcomed with ardor a name that flattered its patriotism; and Italy became the dupe of these ridiculously vain assumptions. After having first been inserted in a work of Cosmography, then graven on planispheres, the name AMERICA is found, the first time, in 1570, engraved on a globe in relief. This globe, of a metallic composition, richly embossed in gold and silver, was the work of a Milanese, — Francesco Basso.

At that time the name "America" was accepted without dissent. For a long period Columbus was not remembered. His posterity, who could have revived his name, were already extinct in the male line. In forming his "Collection of Voyages," in 1507, Fracanzo de Montalbodo made no inquiry as regarded the death of Columbus, and even was ignorant of his last maritime expedition. In the Latin translation, the preface of which appears signed by Madrignano, the first of June, 1508, it was said, that "Up to this date, Christopher Columbus and his brother, delivered from their captivity, lived in honor at the Court of Spain." The continuator of Hernandez del Pulgar's celebrated "Chronicle of the Catholic Sovereigns," Master

* *Orbis Typus Universalis*, etc., 1572.

Valles, attributes the discovery of the New World, not to a man, but to a caravel; * he makes an allusion to the fable of the pilot who died at the house of Columbus. This carelessness, which was the natural consequence of so many mistakes, followed as a matter of course, from the great disrepute in which the career of the grand Admiral of the Ocean had terminated. The indifference of the public for his glory may be judged from the fact, that a cotemporary of the Discovery, Lucio Marineo, an elegant writer, who came from Sicily to Castile to create a taste for Latin letters, in writing his "History of Memorable Affairs of Spain," had already caused confusion on the subject of the Discovery, by disfiguring the singularly symbolic name of *Christopher* Columbus, and not blushing to call him PETER COLUMBUS.† He thus rendered himself the accomplice of the Teuton, Jobst Ruchamer, who, in his first German book in which the New World is spoken of, does not once mention the name of Columbus, and perseveres in calling him Christopher Dawber,‡ which means CHRISTOPHER COCK-DOVE.

These men were not aware of the enormity of their profanation.

After his third voyage, Columbus had fallen so low in public estimation that nobody deigned to trouble himself about him. For many he was no longer of this world. Others, attaching no importance to what concerned him, took no pains to verify the dates. We see that this depreciation of his glory was general at the time when the first three "Oceanic Decades" of Peter Martyr appeared at Alcala de Henares in 1516, ten years before the first edition of the first books of the "History of the Indies," by Oviedo, published at Toledo, and when the Venetian, Ramusio, had

* Valles. *Breve y compendiosa adición a la Cronica de los catolicos reyes*, etc., cap. i, fol. ccciii.

† Lucii Marinei Siculi, *De rebus Hispaniæ memorabilibus*.

‡ I think *Dawber* must have been a misprint, and that it should, probably, have been *Tauber*, which expresses the above meaning.—B.

already undertaken his "Collection of Voyages." The proof of this is seen by their writings. All of them go to exonerate Columbus from the accusations which malevolence continued to spread against him since his death. Nevertheless, the views of the Spanish historians were powerless to reform public opinion: First, because their works, being too learned, were not destined to become popular; next, because none of these works were published in a complete state of finish; lastly and particularly, because the greater part of them remained in manuscripts. The second son of Columbus, Don Fernando, who wrote the biography of his father, did not terminate his work until 1536, and left it in manuscript. The virtuous Bartholomew Las Casas commenced his too late, and finished it only in fifty-three years after the death of Christopher Columbus. He left it in manuscript. Opinion remained, then, under the influence of the most unjust prejudices. The calumny Columbus had experienced since his triumph at the return of his first voyage, unappeased by his death, became implacable against his name, sat on his tomb, and defamed his memory.

SECTION II.

In the midst of this almost general injustice, the Roman Pontificate alone preserved the thought of the apostolic grandeur of Columbus.

Successively three Popes had honored with their confidence this herald of the Cross. The Holy See never failed in its regard for him. The Sacred College remained faithful to this noble sympathy. Already, during his lifetime, when his glory encountered so many detractors in that Spain which he had made the greatest nation in the world, at Rome the Holy Father and the Cardinals honored his immortal labors. The only writing of this great man that was published during his lifetime was printed at Rome, in 1493, by Aliander de Cosco, in the house of Eucharius Argentinus.

The first personage in Rome who received and propagated the historic details of the Discovery, was Cardinal Ascanio Sforza.

Cardinal Bernardin Carvajal corresponded, in relation to Columbus, with the celebrated scholar, Peter Martyr d'Anghierra, professor of Latin at the Court of Spain.

Cardinal Luiz d'Arragon sent one of his secretaries to collect, under the dictation of Peter Martyr, what that elegant scholar had learned from Columbus himself.

The illustrious Cardinal Bembo inserted in his "History of Venice" a whole book on the discovery of Columbus.

Pope Leo X. caused to be read, during the evenings of winter, in the midst of the Pontifical Court, all the discoveries of Columbus, the history of which was written by Peter Martyr d'Anghierra, under the title of OCEANIC DECADES.

Almost the whole of the Roman cardinalate invited a noble citizen of the city, — Guilio-Cesare Stella, — to write in Latin verse the epopee of the New World.

Cardinal Alexander Farnese particularly gave celebrity to this work, by causing the manuscript to be read at his Villa Farnese, in the presence of purpled togas. He engaged the Jesuit, Father Francesco Benci, to enrich it with a preface.

Cardinal Benedetto Pamphili counselled another Jesuit, Father Ubertino Carrara, to compose a poem on the same subject.

Cardinal Sforza Pallavicino celebrated, himself, the work of Columbus, in his FASTI SACRI.

The Cardinal-Bishop of Verona, the great Agostino Valerio, in his book, *De Consolatione Ecclesiæ*, eulogizes grandly the work of the Discovery, and its importance to Catholicity; and implicitly glorifies Columbus, in applying to his mission some remarkable texts from the prophecies of Isaias.

It was under the auspices of Pope Innocent IX., and of Cardinal Gabriel Paleotto, that the learned Oratorian,

Thomas Bozius, published the part of his work, *De Signis Ecclesiæ Dei*, in which he also applies to Columbus divers passages of some prophecies.

The first cardinal who engaged a poet to celebrate, in the Italian language, the voyages of Columbus, was a Frenchman, his Eminence Antoine Perrenot, better known under the name of Cardinal Granvelle; and it must be acknowledged that the poet Lorenzo Gambara carried out his intentions.

It was in Rome that a noble Genoese historian, Uberto Foglieta, vented his indignation against "the shameful silence and incredible blindness" of his country, which accorded statues to some citizens for ordinary causes, and had erected none to the only one of her children whose glory was unequalled.* Until the year 1577, the Republic of Genoa, partaking of the indifference of the other States in regard to Columbus, had not dreamt of consecrating to him a block of that marble of which its palaces are so lavish. It was from the Eternal City that the generous protest of the Genoese patrician went forth, and his declaration of the incomparable service† rendered by his countryman to the Church of Jesus Christ.

Thanks to Roman influence, Italy did not entirely lose the remembrance of Columbus. The voice of the poets, encouraged by the Cardinalate, awakened patriotism. As in the heroic times of Greece, seven cities had disputed for the birthplace of Homer, so now were seen seven cities and market-places claiming the honor of having given birth to Columbus. Savona, Pradello, Nervi, Cugureo, Bugiasco, Cuccaro, dared to enter the lists with Genoa the Superb. But, apart from this contest of local self-love, the rest of Europe, and particularly France, attached no serious importance to the person of Columbus or to his superhuman

* Uberto Foglieta, *Clarorum Ligurum Elogia*, p. 36. Printed at Rome, in 1577.

† Ibid.

work, and nobody thought of writing his history. No one even took the pains of translating at full length the part of the works relative to America, which was published in Spain under the title of *History of the West Indies*. People were contented with vague rumors, — with palpable errors. The only circumstance which prevented Columbus from being entirely forgotten was, perhaps, the stupid story of the egg, which, notwithstanding its extreme improbability, was received as true. Columbus had discovered the New World, and to explain his discovery broke the end of an egg on a table! This story summed up the two principal events of his life, — the only ones that were to be remembered. The story of the egg being pleasant for children, the first history of Columbus that was written in Germany, was for the amusement of youth.

How could men be seriously occupied with thoughts of Columbus at a time when his work was so little considered by the writers, the philosophers who ruled the eighteenth century, — a time when the whole American continent was known, and the extent as well as the form of the earth determined? Those men who imagined they had found in America objections against Moses and the Sacred Scriptures, were not placed in favorable circumstances to appreciate the mission of the man who had placed the old world in relation with the new.

We cannot be astonished at the errors of vulgar minds, when we see a celebrated writer, Raynal, decked with the title of Philosopher, and author of the famous *Philosophical History of the Indies*, place Vasco de Gama above Columbus, in considering the passage of the Cape as the grandest epoch of history! * To thank the Academy of Lyons for having elected him among its members, he proposed to it a prize on this silly platitude, which he decorated with the name of *question*: “Has the discovery of America been hurtful or beneficial to mankind?”

* Raynal. *Histoire Philos. et Pol. des Indes*, t. 1, p. 98.

Among those encyclopædists, who, according to their title, knew all the sciences, not one of them appreciated Columbus, or the grandeur of his work. The learned Buffon himself, participating in the general contempt for the importance of the New World, placed the discovery of the Portuguese before that of Columbus: "They doubled the Cape of Good Hope, they traversed the seas of Africa and of the Indies, and, whilst they directed all their views to the East and to the South, Christopher Columbus turned his towards the West." *

Protestantism came to the aid of French Philosophy.

Robertson found that for the Discovery there was no need for Columbus. "If the sagacity of Columbus," says he, "had not made known to us America, some years later a happy chance would have conducted us to it." † As if ever anybody would have dared to venture into those dread latitudes, had not the success of Christopher Columbus removed the fears of mariners, and thrown light on the mysteries of the GLOOMY OCEAN!

Seeing that the claims of Columbus could be so easily passed over, a French diplomatist, M. Otta, thought he exhibited an instance of philosophic perspicacity, and one that deserved praise from archæology, in trying to prove that Columbus had not made the discovery, inasmuch as America was known before his enterprise. The first of April, 1786, he addressed from New York, to the celebrated Dr. Franklin, a memoir on the subject. In the following year, in the materialistic observations and additions to the philosophical memoirs of Ulloa upon the discovery of America, the old accusations of the enemies of Columbus were revived, and the famous unknown pilot, who confided his charts to him, received the title of NAVIGATOR.‡

* Buffon. *Œuvres Compl.*, augmentées par Cuvier.

† Robertson. *History of America*. B. I.

‡ "This navigator to whom he owed all the glory of his discoveries." — Ulloa. *Memoires, Philos. Histor. Phys. concernant la découverte de l'Amerique*, t. II.

Already, others, not limiting themselves to having despoiled him of his discovery, disputed his assiduity and his talent for observation. It is well known that the first observation of terrestrial magnetism was made on the mariner's compass by Christopher Columbus, the thirteenth of September, 1492. Fontenelle, in his *History of the Royal Academy of Sciences*, hesitates not in giving the homage of this discovery to Sebastian Cabot, who did not set out until 1497, or even to Dieppois Grignon, who was posterior to the latter by thirty years!

This depreciation of Columbus, the incertitude in regard to his origin, his country, his work, was the reason why he was spoken of at random, and without attaching much importance to him. The gravest men by no means prided themselves with accuracy in facts and dates, when the question was about Columbus. Thus, Montesquieu himself, in his *Spirit of the Laws*, blames those who regretted that Francis I. had not furnished ships to "Christopher Columbus, who had proposed the Indies to him."* He forgets that America was discovered twenty-three years before Francis I. mounted the throne. It is thus that another pedant, a cotemporary of ours, M. de Marchangy, in his *Poetic Gaul*, considers the discovery only as accessory, accords it only a secondary rank, and, after having spoken of the Cape of Good Hope doubled by Vasco de Gama, says only: "Towards the same time, the Discovery of America by Christopher Columbus gave new developments to this commercial activity, and to this liking for distant expeditions," etc.† As if the expedition of Vasco de Gama, which dates from 1497, was not the consequence of the discovery of Columbus in 1492!

In the same manner, Spain did not manifest greater scruples, and continued to treat very cavalierly the immortal renown of the discoverer of America. In his grand *General*

* Montesquieu. *De l'Esprit des Loix*, c. XVIII.

† Marchangy. *Gaule Poétique*, t. VII.

History of Spain, Mariana recognizes in Columbus no merit of discovery or initiation. In his estimation, the Discovery was a collective work. He says: "With what good fortune and prodigious success these *intrepid men* traversed the boundless space of the ocean." After having mentioned the infamous calumny of the pretended pilot who died at the house of Columbus, and by the latter despoiled of his glory, he relates that by the aid of charts pilfered from the deceased, Columbus recognized "all the coasts that are between the two poles, from the Strait of Magellan to Cape de Vacallao," and that thus he traversed more than five thousand leagues.* The author of another *General History of Spain*, Ferreras, assigns the discovery of the New World to Americus Vespuccius, whom he confounds with the fabulous pilot, always dead, at Columbus's house, and pretends that it was by means of the notes and charts of Americus that Columbus started on his enterprise.†

In our own days there is manifested a movement of reparative justice and friendliness for the fame of Columbus. Pains are taken to honor him. The portraits, the statues of the hero are multiplied. Several cities raise monuments to him. Books and periodicals tend to popularize his biography. Still, never was his glory in greater danger than at the present day. Notwithstanding the recititude of his intentions, Columbus remains unavoidably unappreciated. The worst of obscurities, — that which is produced by a false literature, — separates us from him. Historic error has condensed its darkness around his memory. This supercilious and pedantic error we know intimately. We have found out the secret of his birth, followed his footsteps from the cradle, noted the dates of his first movements, and apprehended the cause of his success, and of the credit which it knew how to obtain.

* Mariana. *General History of Spain*, B. xxvi.

† Ferreras. *General History of Spain*, t. viii.

But, previously, in order to show how lively an interest there is attached to the memory of Columbus, let us take a look at the sympathies of our age for that grandeur which has not yet been wholly revealed to it.

SECTION III.

In the beginning of this century, a Frenchman whom we have known personally, M. de Pons, wrote an account of his voyage to the part of the continent discovered by Columbus,* and came to Paris to print his book, in which he made manifest his admiration for the discoverer of the New World. Towards the same time, the Academy of Turin listened to communications relative to Columbus.

In 1805, a Piedmontese Count, Galeani Napione, published a dissertation on the country of Columbus, who he pretended was born at Cuccaro, in Montferrat.†

In 1809, the Abbé Francois Cancellieri published in Rome some epistolary dissertations on Columbus. Encouraged by the success that attended it, Galeani Napione gave, on the same subject, a dissertation, entitled, *Of the First Discoverer of the New Continent*.‡ A year after, Morelli published at Venice, and republished at Bassano, under the name of *Lettera rarissima*, a letter by Columbus, written from Jamaica. This document, for a long time forgotten, made great noise among learned societies. Savona became concerned about the pretensions of Cuccaro, and wrote to reclaim its rights. Genoa stood up for its own; its Academy of Sciences, Letters and Arts, named among its members a commission charged with examining the question of the birthplace of Columbus, and in 1812 their report excited a lively interest.§

* De Pons. *Voyage a la partie Orientale de la Terre Firme*. 3 vols.

† Napione. *Della patria di Cristoforo Colombo*.

‡ *Del primo scopritore del continente del Nuovo Mondo*.

§ *Ragionamento nel quale si conferma l'opinione generale intorno alla patria di Cristoforo Colombo*, etc.

The fall of the French Empire, and the reorganization of Italian States, postponed the discussion, without terminating it.

In 1816, The Edinburgh Review renewed the debate.

In 1817, Luigi Bossi prepared, at Milan, his life of Christopher Columbus.

In 1818, Cardinal Zurla spoke of Columbus in his *Voyages of the Most Illustrious Venetians*.

In 1819, Father Spotorno, a Barnabite and a bibliographer, published, at Genoa, his work entitled, *Of the Origin and Country of Christopher Columbus*, in three volumes.

In 1823, the Municipal Council of Genoa caused, by the aid of subscriptions, all the title-deeds and documents relative to Columbus to be published, and had them united in a magnificent volume, bearing the title of *Codice diplomatico Americano*, which it charged Father Spotorno to grace with a biographical introduction.

The year following, France, which could not remain indifferent to this ardor for the glory of Columbus, had a translation made of his life, by Bossi.* Spain did not remain a stranger to the current of thought. The director of the Royal Academy of History of Madrid, Don Martin Fernandez de Navarrete, hastened the collection of the documents relative to the history of America, and the progress of the marine, which he made by order of the Crown. In 1825, the first volume was consigned to the press.†

In the course of 1826, while the advocate Giambattista Belloro renewed at Genoa the pretensions of Sacone to be considered the birthplace of Columbus, and inserted his dissertation in the *Astronomical Correspondence of Baron de Zach*, Mexico published the two works of La Vega and of Bustamente on the discovery of the New World. The same year, an American writer who sojourned in Spain,

* *Histoire de Christophe Colombe*. Paris, 1824.

† *Coleccion de los Viajes y Descubrimientos que hicieron por mar los Españoles desde el fin del siglo, xv.*

Mr. Washington Irving, placed in relation with the archivists of Madrid, and having at his disposal materials already prepared, wrote his *History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*. This work, welcomed with a lively interest, was circulated in a few years in all the nations of Europe.

In 1828, M. Ferdinand Denis, under the form of a historical romance, gave a lovely and poetic picture of the Discovery, in which the distinctive character of Columbus is seized with as much exactness as it is expressed with felicity. *Ismaël ben Kaïssar** is the title of this composition, in which the richness of lively local colorings are happily allied with the truth of history. We have seen, later, a celebrated romancer of the United States, Fenimore Cooper, becoming occupied with this subject, wish to appropriate and transpose it into his own language,† but without succeeding in infusing into it that spontaneous effulgence, that charm of description, which is poetically faithful to the perfumes of intertropical nature, with which Fernando Denis had impregnated his work. Afterwards, a translation of Washington Irving's work, augmented with annotations, was published in Genoa. Some years later, Humboldt wrote comments on the discoveries of Columbus, in five volumes, under the title of *A Critical Examination of the History and the Geography of the New Continent*.

In 1843, our book, *THE CROSS IN THE TWO WORLDS*, came to reveal, for the first time, the providential mission confided to Columbus, and to affirm loudly the saintliness of his character. This work, come to its fourth edition, translated, as is well known, into Italian, on its first appearance taught people to consider, under his true character, the herald of the Cross.

The events of 1848, and the European commotion which was their consequence, did not for a long time turn the

* *Ismaël ben Kaïssar, ou la decouverte del Nouveau Monde.*

† Under the title, *Mercedes of Castile*.

attention of the public from a subject that always engrosses its attention without ever tiring it. Some of the American republics wished to honor the hero of the two worlds. Several cities awarded him monuments. In 1850, the government of Peru determined to honor him with a colossal statue in the great square of Lima, and confided its execution to the celebrated sculptor, Salvatore Revelli. In 1851, an eminent Ligurian, attached to the service of His Holiness, Monseigneur Stefano Rossi, published a remarkable work, entitled, "On the Exile of Christopher Columbus, a Genoese." *

In 1852, our illustrious friend Count Tullio Dandolo published at Milan his work,—*The Ages of Dante and of Columbus*,—in which he copied the part of our book, THE CROSS IN THE TWO WORLDS, which touched on the religious character of Columbus, and the whole of Italy praised the new work.

In 1853, the only descendant of the Counts Colombo de Cuccaro, Monseigneur Luigi Colombo, domestic prelate of His Holiness, composed a work on his immortal relative. In his book,† which was in press at the time of our last sojourn in Rome, and the proof-sheets of which the virtuous prelate had the courtesy to communicate to us, the question of the birthplace is raised, but not exhausted definitively. The work, presenting an *ensemble* of appreciations on the extensive subject of relationship, rather than a real history of the discoveries of Christopher Columbus, contains, nevertheless, a cursory view of the services rendered to the world by the man who completed our knowledge of it.‡

* *Del discacciamento di Cristoforo Colombo, Genovese*, in 8o.

† *Patria e Biografia del grande ammiraglio D. Cristoforo Colombo*, etc. Roma.

‡ Several other writers who have written biographies of Columbus are mentioned by M. De Lorgues. — B.

SECTION IV.

Thus, from the first days of the nineteenth century to more than its first half, an ascending series of publications, more and more brought together in proportion as we are removed from the epoch of the Discovery, shows the progressive interest that is attached to the memory of Columbus. This constant succession of labors and of testimonials on the same subject, a constancy of which our age does not offer a second example, sufficiently shows how far research is from having exhausted this magnificent theme of history.

But this persistence of public interest reveals an unsatisfied desire, and indicates a new expectation. There is reason for wishing for new details, for new elucidations. The instinct of people is not deceived. Now, we declare loudly that after all these homages of the arts, these labors of the learned, and these assertions of historians, Christopher Columbus is worse known in our days than he was a century ago. At that time people were at least ignorant of him, and did not pretend to have known him thoroughly. The incertitude of opinion was notorious; and persons knew they did not know him, or that they had of him only a wrong knowledge, which is often the worst kind of knowledge. At present, everybody has the pretension, apparently well founded, of knowing and judging of Columbus. Opinion is formed on the appreciation of writers whose accredited names countenance the error of the common herd. Only one voice has been heard, that of a learned and ambitious coterie, which has gained possession of the history of Columbus, and made personal property of his memory.

The time for his historic Rehabilitation is come at last. We shall tell the whole truth about him.

The coterie alluded to is composed solely of four writers. Of the four, only one has written the life of Columbus in the regular form of history; two have written only disser-

tations and introductions; the last one has written neither memoir nor biography,— he has limited himself to a commentary,— but the authority of his European name has sanctioned the errors put forth by the three others, aggravating them with all the weight of his own errors.

These four writers, whose tacit and retrospective association has obtained the monopoly of the history of Columbus, and who denaturalize his person and his providential role, are,— the Genoese, Giambattista Spotorno; the American, Washington Irving; the Spanish academician, D. Martin Fernandez de Navarrete; and the illustrious Prussian, Alexander Humboldt.

Spotorno wrote by order of the decurional corps of Genoa; Navarrete, by order of the Court of Spain; Irving, to gain the literary crown which his preceding successes presaged; Humboldt, to mark with an everlasting seal his travels in the equinoctial regions.

Spotorno and Navarrete have only written dissertations, and laboriously collected materials, from which Messrs. Humboldt and Irving have composed,— the latter, his *History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*; the former, his *Critical Examination of the History and Geography of the New Continent*. These four writers have deceived themselves, and deceived us. The official position of the two former, and the great notoriety of the two others, have invested their labors with imperious authority; and they have imposed their errors on our cotemporaries.

A strange circumstance! never until now has any European written the life of Columbus. A thing not less strange, no Catholic writer has hitherto given the complete biography of the messenger of the Cross in those new regions. As the justly celebrated Father Ventura de Raulica has remarked, whilst the history of Bossi counts scarcely forty-three pages, that of Washington Irving is composed of four volumes, 8vo, and the commentaries of Humboldt of five volumes, 8vo. Now, Irving and Humboldt, the only writers

who have fully treated of this history, are both Protestants. It will be easily conceived that athwart the prejudices of sect, they could not judge soundly of the spirit and the acts of the man in whom the most ardent Catholicity was personified. The history of this servant of God has been exclusively presented to the public by two men opposed to his faith, to the yearnings of his heart, to the aspirations of his soul. The biography of Columbus has remained in the hands of his natural enemies. They have presented him to us such as they have made him, far from us, without restraint, without control.

The vast success obtained by the work of Irving, and the great name of Humboldt, have deterred persons from all efforts in the way of vindication or of rectification; that which issued from their Protestant pens has appeared to be the definitive judgment of history. For the last twenty-eight years, academicians, learned societies, biographies, reviews, encyclopædias, repeat, with respect, facts and opinions derived from these two writers; and there is scarcely in the whole world a single line printed on Columbus that has not been, with docility, borrowed from one or other of these two sources. Whence it follows that the view taken of it by Protestantism is the only one by which people have judged of the most vast, and evidently, the most superhuman achievement of Catholic genius. Hence it again follows that prejudice, enmity, and hostility against the Catholic Church, have the incredible privilege of teaching the Catholic world the life of a man who is one of its most shining glories.

Is not such an anomaly as strange as it is irrational? Even before any examination, is it not evident that prejudice must have wormed itself into the appreciation that Protestantism could make of the herald of the Catholic Church, who was sent by her inspiration to the inhabitants of unknown regions? The Protestant school could not comprehend the character and the mission of Columbus. To the obstacle arising from religious belief, must be joined

another coming from its system of historic composition. The biographies of Columbus have been written conformably to a preconceived order of ideas, and solely in accordance with the data of human philosophy. The Protestant school does not attribute a supernatural character to an event that has doubled the world. It does not recognize in it a day marked by Divine Wisdom, and the accomplishment of a will inspired by the Most High. According to its disciples, this Discovery, in default of Columbus, would have quite naturally followed, from the progress of nautical science. They cannot bring themselves to see, in the discovery of the New World, a providential intervention. How could they, then, accord a Divine aid to the faith of Columbus? They prefer attributing to the compass and the astrolabe, what they refuse to Divine bounty. They admit the miracles of human genius, and deny heavenly favors. They refuse giving to God what they are willing to give to man. And while Christopher Columbus, after having so many times experienced supernatural aid, recognized it with gratitude, declared it even in his official reports to government, and considered himself as a simple instrument in the hands of Providence, they, in recounting his history, obstinately deny this efficacious assistance. They pretend to know Columbus better than Columbus knew himself.

Conformably to their theory that the motives of human acts are always identical, they have rejected the superior character of Columbus, the man chosen by Heaven, and despoiled him of his spiritual grandeur in order to make him like the rest of men. They have studied to lessen him, to shorten him to their own stature. They have invested him with their own sentiments; they have lent him their own views, their own instincts; judging of him by their own hearts. Lest some traces of his native grandeur should survive in the majesty of his character, they have found in him not only imperfections, but also defects, — even vices. Nevertheless, their indulgence has

mercifully induced them to forgive him, in comparing him with the heroes of pagan antiquity, whose grandeur did not exempt them from paying tribute to human frailty. Under the pretext of erudition, of the impartiality of historic criticism, this Coterie of Four Writers has denaturalized the inmost facts of the life of Columbus.

After having exhumed all the accusations repeated against him during his lifetime, they have known how to aggravate them with a calumny of which his cotemporaries could have had no idea. In the most envenomed persecutions he endured, never did any enemy of Columbus attack his purity of manners. The breath of hatred never dared to tarnish this mirror of chastity. Such an imposture was reserved for our days.

Is it not time to dissipate this calumny, conceived in Piedmont, born at Genoa, nourished in Spain, and adopted with ardor by Protestantism, — to oppose to it the Catholic grandeur of the man who was providentially charged with raising the veil that during six thousand years hid from us the totality of the terrestrial globe? Let the piety of the faithful be reassured; let the admirers of Columbus have no fear; the herald of the Cross was always without reproach, as he was always without fear. And if he should have participated in our imperfections, — our almost involuntary oversights, — at least he never forgot the obligations he owed for the honor the Divine Majesty deigned to confer on him. Nevertheless, for those who have at heart the integrity of history as much as the glory of Columbus, we ought, before relating the life of this great Servant of God, to expose, in a few lines, the calumny which is the ground of the different imputations directed against him.

We are going to show how this calumny was impudently brought forward, accepted, accredited, and imposed on the learned of Europe.

In 1805, Galeani Napione, an erudite, but cavilling and opinionative writer, who held out against all evidence that Columbus was born at the chateau of Cuccaro, in Mont-

ferrat, examining the voluminous medley of lawsuits successively carried on in Spain on account of the inheritance of the descendants of Columbus, imagined he found a coruscation of historic light in a memorandum drawn up in behalf of a certain Diego Colon y Larriategui, but which was rejected by the court. The attorney needed, for his cause, to attack retrospectively, and through the course of ages, the legitimacy of the second son of Columbus, Don Fernando. As the proof of the illegitimacy did not result from any ostensible document, from any instrument either past or present, the crafty lawyer sought to deduce it, not from an expression which he found to his liking, but, on the contrary, from the absence of a word which he pretended to be necessary, although it did not gain him his cause. In his will, Columbus charged his heir to give a pension to Beatrix Enriquez, the mother of his second son, Don Fernando. That was very clear. But the testator did not precede with the title of wife the name of the lady. The attorney, from this circumstance, inferred the absence of the matrimonial tie, and consequently the illegitimacy of Fernando Columbus. Who would believe it? this contemptible quibble appeared a light to Napione! Thereupon he amplified quite a series of arguments of equal force, and presented, as a discovery he made on the civil *status* of Columbus, this miserable inference, due to the cavilling of the poor licentiate, Luis de la Palma y Freytas. Napione had thus, at a cheap rate, the honor of presenting new and keen views.

In 1809, a French antiquarian and bibliographer, Francois Cancellieri, expert in collecting and classifying facts, but destitute of philosophic acumen, repeated, without examination, the pretended inference made by Napione, of which, it must be said, nobody at first took notice. Hitherto this bold accusation, hazarded in a work of slender importance, did not imperil the good name of Columbus; but, according to the common proverb, "One is never betrayed but by his own" (*les siens*), some years

after, a Genoese, Father Sportorno, an old Barnabite, excited with a keen resentment against the second son of Columbus, Don Fernando, whom he accused of having designedly disseminated some doubts in regard to the origin and the birthplace of his father, welcomed with ardor this imputation of bastardy, which favored his animosity.

Neither the contrary proof, resulting doubly from the assertions and the silence of the Spanish writers, nor the demonstration so logical of the facts, nor the character almost sacerdotal of the messenger of the Cross, could remove his prejudice. This stain of origin, whatever it may cost, was necessary for him, to cast, in his turn, some doubt on the veracity of the historian the nearest in point of time, and the best acquainted with Columbus. In all his writings, Sportorno recurs with a malignant satisfaction to the pretended illicit intimacy of Columbus with Beatrix Enriquez, and renews the charge of illegitimacy against Don Fernando. Not content with having, in 1819, inserted it in his book, "Of the Origin and of the Country of Christopher Columbus," he proudly repeated it in his "Literary History of Liguria," but in giving it as the product of his own sagacity. Thus, as Napione had decked himself with the quibble stolen from a distant Spanish attorney, so, by force of repeating the plagiarism committed on Napione, Sportorno finishes with claiming as his own personal property this miserable calumny, ignorant of its true consequences.

In the eyes of unthinking readers, this pretended discovery of the secret passion of Columbus gained for Sportorno the reputation of being a learned critic; it obtained for him, in 1823, the honor of being charged by the decurial corps of Genoa with the publication of some documents relative to Columbus, the collection of which formed the *Codice Colombo Americano*. The care of introducing the new volume with a notice of the Genoese hero, was intrusted to him. Sportorno could not fail, in availing himself of so favorable an opportunity, to re-

commence his imputation of bastardy. He uttered, them, his accusations of secret amours against the father, in order to stigmatize the son. The official position of Father Spotorno obtained for his notice as much authority as it did notoriety. It was he that propagated the notion of the frailty of the Hero.

Precisely at that period, Martin Fernandez de Navarrete was continuing the "Collection of the Maritime Voyages of the Spaniards," commenced by the learned Don Bautista Muñoz, by order of Charles IV. A writer of a graceful style, but destitute of originality,—accomplished with a special kind of learning, but wanting in that reach of thought which belongs to elevated minds,—Navarrete, obtaining many offices, many honors, carried to idolatry his respect for the royal majesty. Indignant at the freedom of Bossi, and especially at that of his French translator, who briefly recalled the ingratitude of Ferdinand the Catholic towards Columbus, he undertook the task of exculpating the most ungrateful, by calumniating the most generous of men. Vengeance armed his pen. Yet, in the whole course of his researches, Navarrete found nothing that could cast the least suspicion on the relations of Columbus with Beatriz Enriquez. All his annotations showed Fernando as the legitimate son of the Admiral of the Ocean. The calumny of Spotorno came to give him a new arm.

Starting from that moment, we meet with quite a display of accusations. Columbus left Portugal secretly, in order to defraud his creditors. If he showed great patience in the delays made by the Court of Spain in regard to the project of his discoveries, this patience, this force of soul that was attributed to his Catholic faith, is explained by a secret cause: Columbus loved to distraction a certain beauty of Cordova, whom he had made a mother. Consequently, with him religious appearances were only skilfulness of conduct; he conformed exteriorly to the habits of the court, which was then very rigid in regard to morals. His unscrupulousness and hypocrisy being once admitted,

Navarrete pursues with advantage his accusations, shows the insatiable avidity of Columbus, and seems to admit some acts of disloyalty and malversation. In wresting and mutilating the narration of Oviedo, that old enemy of Columbus, he supposes some unspecified crimes,—some concealed misdemeanors,—for which it was sought to punish him without public chastisement. Afterwards come the charges of violence and of cruelty. The courtier has calumniated Columbus beyond measure, in order the better to praise the clemency of Ferdinand, who, he pretends, was gracious to him, and treated him with kindness.

Navarrete afterwards seeks to judge of Columbus from the point of view of the philosophy of history. He finds that “his faults were the peculiar consequences of human frailty, and probably of the education he received, of the career he embraced, and of the country in which he was born,—a country in which traffic and business formed the principal branch of riches, private as well as public.” Navarrete does not think that, in speaking thus, he diminishes the glory of Columbus as “the author of the discovery of the New World,” and supports his views with some examples: “Alexander dominated by wrath, and afterwards by superstition; Alcibiades having many admirable qualities and infamous vices; Cæsar uniting inordinate ambition with eminent qualities,” etc. It is thus that the disciple of Jesus Christ is appreciated! People think they do him much honor by comparing him to the great men of Paganism!

Before the impassioned lucubrations of Navarrete were entirely printed, Washington Irving, who was in Spain, became acquainted with them. Although a Protestant, and, therefore, a greater stranger than Spotorno and Navarrete to the sentiments that animated Columbus, he, nevertheless, conceived a higher and a juster idea of the great man than they did. His rectitude of mind, aided by his bibliographical researches, showed him the short-sightedness and the partiality of these two collectors of historic

materials. Although controlled to a certain extent by their influence, and not daring to come in opposition with Navarrete, he admits only a part of their accusations, mitigates them, and does not hazard the interpretations of Spotorno but with a hesitation bordering on repugnance.

Far from pardoning in growing older, Father Spotorno embittered against Fernando Columbus; and, taking pride in the conjecture of bastardy welcomed so warmly by Navarrete, returns to the charge with a puerile ostentation. He boasts of his pretended discovery, while the shameful merit of this error belongs of right to Napione. In his annotations to the Genoese edition of Irving, Spotorno, the true inspirer of the anonymous notes, reproaches the American author with timidity. He attributes it to the circumstance that Irving had not read his own work on the "Origin and the Country of Christopher Columbus." He sifts again what he had already written in the work *Della Origine*, in the *Codice Colombo Americano*, in the *Literary History*. Not content with repeating his assertions, he adds, by way of induction, new blunders to his preceding mistakes, and finishes with proving how little he was acquainted with Columbus.

This can be judged of from a single example: Spotorno, having mistaken the meaning of some words of Peter Martyr in regard to an Indian of the Lucaya isles baptized in Spain, having for godfather Don Diego Columbus, and therefore named *Diego*, according to Christian custom, confounds this Diego, who served as an interpreter to the Admiral, with his godfather Don Diego, brother of the Admiral; and speaks seriously of the marriage of the Genoese, Don Diego Columbus, with an Indian lady of Hayti; whereas it was the Lucayan interpreter, Diego, who espoused the Indian lady. It is still only an error in regard to person, to situation, — a gross improbability. But what becomes culpable is, that upon this absurd notion Spotorno dares to bring an accusation against the character of Columbus.

Spotorno judges that Beatrix Enriquez did not belong to the nobility; that she must have been very poor; and that the remorse of Columbus, and his fear of the cause of it being discovered, prove manifestly that his connection with her was not cemented by a legitimate union.

The persistence of Spotorno, the positive tone of his assertions, and especially the silence of contradictors, have imposed on his fellow-citizens. His accusations, far from being combated, have been reproduced with eagerness; he has passed for a kind of oracle at Genoa, and in the whole of Liguria.

The respect generally manifested for Spotorno by the writers of Liguria (except in their differences on the question of origin), their credulous repetition of his silly stuff, and their mutual respect for the errors of each other, would still have been of little consequence, if Navarrete had not seized with malignant joy the denunciations of Spotorno against the amours of Columbus in Cordova. And even this accusation would have had no untoward notoriety, destitute as it was of foundation, had not the illustrious Humboldt accorded it credit, in screening with his encyclopædic name the accusations made by Navarrete.

After the history of Washington Irving, the work which most expressly and most fully treats of Columbus is assuredly that which has been published by Humboldt, under the title of *A Critical Examination of the History and the Geography of the New Continent*. These two works, then, compose solely the groundwork of science and of history relative to the discovery of the New World. The one by his great popularity, the other by his magisterial authority, have fixed, and almost formed public opinion. Academics, learned societies, astronomers, naturalists, and especially mariners, have no opinions about Columbus but those that are peculiar to Humboldt. We ourselves based our opinions on him before we examined with our own eyes. But, whatever may be our esteem for his judgments in matters of pure physical science, we are forced to declare, that

in his "History of the Geography of the New Continent," the acts, and especially the thoughts, of Columbus appear to us interpreted by a spirit foreign, — and we may say antipathic, — to his nature.

Between the two kinds of intuition of Columbus and of Humboldt there was a gulf as broad as the Atlantic. These two men were travellers on this globe: Columbus on water, Humboldt on land. Both of them observed the creation attentively, but each of them from the particular point of view of his faith and of his moral predispositions.

Columbus, an ardent disciple of the Word, of a strong faith, is amazed at the aspect of the magnificent works of his Creator. His meditations, diversified with raptures and overflowing with poesy, arise as hymns with the melody of the breezes, charged with the unknown perfumes of those new regions. Humboldt, in receiving in his capacious mind the multiple impressions of the terrestrial harmonies, never departs from the philosophic coolness of observation, nor allows himself to be carried away beyond the limits of appearances.

Whilst, in his explorations, Columbus incessantly discovered the Lord, his benefactor and his master, Humboldt never came to encounter but the great forces of nature, the laws of nature, the majesty of nature.

Columbus had an implicit faith in the providential, in the divine action that was manifested in him and for him. The communications of the invisible with the visible, the influence of the immutable upon the mutable and accidental, were to him fixed facts. His emotions were proportionate to the vastness of his work, and did not turn him from his object, — the glory of the Word made flesh! In the name of the Redeemer he goes on his mission, invited to the mysteries of the unknown and of the infinite. Humboldt, on the contrary, having no longer to discover the space, since the form and extent of this planet were already exactly determined, could only pretend to verify some meteorological explanations, enrich the universal flora, increase some min-

eral collections, perhaps seize the indices of some general law of the globe, and describe the *ensemble* of its cosmic physiognomy.

The illustrious Humboldt would have wished he were Columbus, had he not been Humboldt. He sometimes appears to find in him a posthumous rival, who has preceded him in the equinoctial countries, and whose penetration has divined many of the grand principles of nature. He has more than once envied his sublime views, and secretly compared himself to him in many an occurrence. He occupied himself seriously with his actions, his particular habits, his writings. Notwithstanding this half sympathy, Humboldt, not being able to comprehend the immortal principle of such a faith, the sublimity of such a view, has misapprehended the principal phases of the life of Columbus. He has not been able, at any one time, to see him in all his entireness. When he yields to some admiration for his genius or his tenderness of heart, one would say he fears to be dominated by the noble character before him, and therefore seeks to abase it. Without espousing the animosity of Navarrete, he welcomes, without having verified them, the peevish assertions of the latter in regard to the harshness, the avidity, the dissimulation of Columbus, for the simple reason that he first admitted the charge against his chastity.

Upon this point Humboldt goes even beyond Navarrete. He laughs with a deplorable laugh at the pretended fall of that great man. This weakness appeared to him to be a *curious fact*, which "Navarrete has disclosed with much sagacity by the comparison of dates." He says that it was less the persuasion of his friends, and his predilection for Spain, "that prevented Christopher Columbus from returning to Lisbon, and accepting of the new offers of the King of Portugal contained in his letter of the twentieth of March, 1488, than the amours and the pregnancy of a beautiful lady of Cordova, Doña Beatrix Enriquez, the mother of Don Fernando Columbus, natural son of the Admiral,

born the fifteenth of August, 1488."* Such is the conclusion of Humboldt. He pledges imprudently his great name, with out having examined the matter by himself.

We affirm that upon this matter Humboldt has read nothing with his own eyes in original sources; that he has depended for it on Navarrete, who derived it from Spotorno, who received it from Napione, who derived it from the chicanery of an attorney in a lawsuit! Still, this accusation has been so generally admitted, that it holds the place of a fixed fact. More than eighty writers of different stamp have repeated it, one after the other. At the present time, this calumny of fifty years' duration is so much accredited, that it takes the airs of an historical fact, supporting itself on certain dates and respectable names. And perhaps no single writer will be found, of the first or the last rank, who, in treating of this subject, dares dispense himself from repeating, for the eighty-first time, this error.

We are going, however, please God, to put an end to it.

We formally protest against this calumnious assertion. We deny the fact of an illicit connection. We deny the details that are connected with it. We assert that Doña Beatriz Enriquez of Cordova was, in the eyes of the Church, the wife of Christopher Columbus. We deny her poverty. We deny her plebeian condition. We deny her state of pregnancy at the time of the message of the King of Portugal. We deny the pretended passion of Columbus for Beatriz that could alone have retained him in Spain, contrary to his other interests.

And all that we have here said, we shall prove forthwith.

SECTION V.

During the lifetime of Columbus, never was there any suspicion cast on the nature of his connection with Beatriz

* Humboldt. *Examen Critique de l'Histoire et de la Géographie*, etc. T. I., p. 104.

Enriquez, nor a doubt raised on the legitimacy of his second son. The idea of such an accusation did not occur to his enemies. After his death, no trace of it is found anywhere. It is not seen in any cotemporary author; it is never found in any Spanish author. Now, it was the part of Spain, rather than that of Italy, to know the civil *status* of Columbus. In Italy, even, during more than three hundred years, no such accusation is found. Not only do historians not accuse him of an illicit connection, but they formally speak of his marriage; and the gravest among them, and especially Tiraboschi, assert that he espoused Beatrix Enriquez in his second marriage.*

No impediment was opposed to their union. She whom Humboldt is pleased to call "a beautiful lady of Cordova,"† was a maiden, and free from every engagement. The great poverty and the plebeian condition of Beatrix Enriquez, which Spotorno brings into notice to show there were obstacles, are both material errors.

The want of fortune could not have stopped Columbus. At this period, what was he himself as regarded Spain? A foreign geographer without influence, a widower charged with a child, drawing charts to gain a livelihood. In his first marriage in Portugal, if he had met with beauty, birth and virtue, assuredly he did not gain riches. Father Spotorno draws from the will of Columbus his proof that Beatrix was very poor, because he enjoins his heir to give her a pension. Intrinsically, this proof is without value. But we find, on the contrary, the denial of this fact in a circumstance relative to the execution of this testamentary behest. During the first years, Beatrix Enriquez received annually a pension of ten thousand maravedis at her dwelling-house in Cordova. Afterwards, the payments were irregular, but she did not demand them. When the

* Tiraboschi. *Storia della letteratura Italiana*, t. vi., lib. i. cap. vi.

† A. Humboldt. *Critical Examination of the History and Geography*, etc. B. II.

heir ceased altogether from paying them during several consecutive years, she made no complaint. Never did she take the pains of reminding him of his duty. It was necessary that he himself should at last remember his obligation.* This want of urgency in claiming arrears, the nobility of silence, appears to us to refute positively the charge of extreme poverty.

The want of high birth could not prevent the marriage; for, according to the avowal of all historians, Beatrix Enriquez was of noble rank. Spotorno alone would have it to be otherwise. But, on this point, we oppose to him a witness who was his own accomplice,—even Navarrete himself. In his quality as a Spaniard, Navarrete cannot contest this notorious fact: the nobility of Beatrix Enriquez. He declares her noble, and of the principal house of Cordova.† Her rank naturally brought her into notice. Her uterine brother, the honorable Rodrigo de Arana, was renowned at Cordova, and the imperial historiographer calls him “the virtuous gentleman.”‡ Her nephew, Don Diego de Arana, accompanied Columbus in his first voyage of discovery, in the quality of inspector-general of the fleet. Ramusio reminds us that he was “a good gentleman of Cordova,” and his nobility must have been well known for Columbus to place under his orders two officers of the Crown, in appointing him governor of the fort of Navidad. In the third voyage of the Admiral, a young brother of Doña Beatrix, Pedro de Arana, commanded one of his ships; for, in consequence of their alliance, there were always some Aranas of Cordova with Columbus. After the death of the Admiral, and that of his son, his successor, we still see a Diego de Arana in the mansion of the Vice-

* Pleito. *Memoria ajustado sobre el hecho.*

† “Doña Beatriz Enriquez doncella noble y principal de aquella ciudad.”—Navarrete, *Dissertation sobre la historia de la Nautica, parte tercera.* § 19, fol. 152.

‡ Oviedo. *La historia natural y general de las Indias.* Lib. II. cap. 12.

queen of the Indies, where his rank, as well as his alliance, gave him precedence over all the officers* of the illustrious widow, Doña Maria de Toledo. The nobility of Beatrix Enriquez is equally made evident by the necrological notice of her son Fernando, published by the annalist of Seville.† Her purity of descent was, in later times, pleaded even by the descendants of the first marriage of Columbus. In 1671, Don Pedro Columbus, in the interest of his cause, reminded the Queen of Spain that the two sons of the grand Admiral of the Ocean had for mothers ladies of the most ancient nobility.‡

Let us now see whether the passion of Columbus for “the beautiful lady of Cordova” was the true cause of his remaining in Spain, notwithstanding the offers of the King of Portugal. So much the worse for the illustrious, Humboldt, if he receives from the facts a contradiction somewhat rude. Who would not have verified the accusations of Navarrete before taking them under his shield?

In the first place, when the letter of King John II. came to Columbus, towards the last of April, 1488, the pregnancy of Beatrix no longer existed, since her accouchement had taken place the twenty-ninth of August of the preceding year. Fernando Columbus, born in Cordova the twenty-ninth of August, 1487 § (and not the fifteenth of August, 1488, as falsely stated by Navarrete, and reasserted without verification by Humboldt), was then eight months old when the letter of the King of Portugal came to his father. It was not, then, the delicate state of Beatrix that caused him to reject the offers of that sovereign.

The Protestant historians agree in withholding from Columbus the merit of his patience, — to attribute it to the

* Navarrete's Collection, t. 1.

† Diego Ortiz de Zunaga. *Ecclesiastical Annals of Seville*. B. xiv., fol. 496.

‡ Mem. in the *Pliego de la casa de Veragas*.

§ Diego Ortiz de Zuniga, *Annales Ecclesiasticos y seculares de la muy noble y muy leal ciudad de Sevilla*. Lib. xiv., fol. 496.

charms of Beatrix Enriquez. It was she alone that could determine him to remain for so long a time in Spain, and enable him to bear the delays he experienced.

The dates will give an answer to this imputation.

Like those rare flowers that will not bear being transplanted, that spring up, bloom, and die in the land where they grow, Beatrix Enriquez, born, raised, and married in Cordova, never passed the walls of that ancient city. Columbus could never enjoy the charm of her presence but in coming himself to Cordova. Now, Cordova is precisely the city in which he least remained, and in which his stay was the shortest, during his residence in Spain. He sojourned there only a few consecutive months the first year of his landing, which was that of his marriage. From that time his visits to Cordova were short and rare, — for duty imperiously required of him to be elsewhere. Official documents prove this.

In 1486, he was already domiciled in the ante-chambers.

In 1487, he was at Salamanca for the purpose of submitting his plan to the Scientific Congress assembled by royal order at that celebrated University. He remained there during the winter, and part of the spring.

He follows the Court unceasingly. Some orders paid by the treasurer, Francis Gonzales of Seville, prove that in May, July, August, and October, he was far away from Cordova.* The pregnancy of Beatrix retained him so little by her, that at the time of her accouchement, the twenty-ninth of August, he was absent. The second day before, he had received four thousand maravedis, and gone to Court by order of the sovereigns. A payment made in October proves yet his absence from Cordova. Winter comes; the Court takes up its residence at Saragossa, and Columbus goes there.

In 1488, he is at Seville. It is there that the King of Portugal addresses him his letter of the twentieth of March.

* *Coleccion Diplomatica*, num. 2.

Afterwards he continues his solicitations. In the summer, he receives for his travelling expenses the sum of three thousand maravedis. The Court fixes itself during winter at Valladolid. Columbus goes there also.

In 1489, Columbus was still far away from Cordova, since it was from that very city that the order of the twelfth of May was issued to Seville, and other places, to entertain gratuitously Christopher Columbus, who was called to the Court for the services of the sovereigns.* He came, in fact, to Cordova, but could remain there only a few days. It is known that he made, as a volunteer, the campaign of Baza. Now this war commenced at the end of May, and was terminated only the fourth of December.

In 1490, Columbus was the guest of the Duke of Medina Sidonia; and, a short time after, that of the Duke of Medina Celi, who was on the point of assuming the expenses of the projected expedition.

In 1491, we see him still at the residence of the Duke of Medina Celi, and thence make some new efforts to gain the favor of the Crown. A letter from this rich lord, addressed to the Grand Cardinal of Spain, the nineteenth of March, 1493, recalls to mind the fact that he gave hospitality to Columbus for two years;† and thus contributed to retaining him in Spain, and avails himself of this service rendered to the Crown to demand a favor.

Let us now judge from these facts, from these dates, whether it was the fascination of "the beautiful lady of Cordova" that retained Columbus in Spain. It is forgotten that in 1488 he was fifty-two years old; that he was engaged in navigation thirty-six years; that his maturity of judgment, and his sincere piety, could not permit an illegitimate affection to become rooted in his heart. That, besides, his elevation of mind and his firmness of will im-

* Documentos Diplomaticos, num. iv.

† Documentos Diplomaticos, num. xiv. *Orig. en el real archiv de Simanc.*

posed silence on his passions, — passions that were subdued less by age and by poverty, than crushed under the weight of that immense thought that contained one-half of the globe.

We shall relate, in its place, under what circumstances Columbus married Doña Beatriz Enriquez. Here we limit ourselves solely to establishing the fact. His union with her was legitimate, and he did not suffer himself to be mastered by anything to the detriment of any of his duties.

The Royal Historiographer of Spain, Antonio de Herrera, whose impartial sagacity and accuracy are unanimously recognized, has removed every doubt in regard to the second marriage of Columbus. These are his words: "After the death of this first wife, he espoused a second, named Beatriz Enriquez, of the city of Cordova, by whom he had Fernando, a virtuous gentleman, well versed in the science of sound learning.*

Navarrete objects that up to this time the registry of the marriage has not been found, and cannot be produced. But neither has the registry of his baptism been found: does it hence follow that he was not baptized? It is hard to explain how the charge of an adulterous connection could be admitted against the evidence of facts, and the judgment of the most common good sense. How could a scandalous commerce have been tolerated by the virtuous family of Doña Beatriz. Would not the vengeance of this noble house have constrained the seducer to make reparation for the stain cast on their honor? What! would it be Cordova that Columbus would have chosen to raise his first-born son in? Would he have charged his mistress, an adulteress, with superintending his education? Would he have sent him by the worthy ecclesiastic, Father Martin Sanchez? And the Queen, — so rigid in regard to manners, — would she have given as pages to her only son, the

* Herrera. *General History of the Voyages and Conquests of Castilians*, etc., 1st dec., b. 1., c. 7.

infant Don Juan, the two brothers Columbus, — one legitimate, the other a bastard? The venerable religious men with whom Columbus spent part of his life, — would they have been accomplices in, or dupes to such a criminal connection? For nobody could be ignorant of his relations with Cordova, and the nature of the business that led him there. From this well-known circumstance, Cordova was considered his real residence, although he never resided there six months at a time. An authentic document proves this. The twenty-third of May, 1493, while his wife, Doña Beatrix, superintended the education of his two sons, Columbus received the premium of first discovery, consisting of a contingent annuity of ten thousand maravedis. It was necessary to determine a place of payment. For his convenience, he was assigned payment at his presumed place of residence, and therefore at Cordova.*

The cotemporary historians of Fernando Columbus cast no doubt on his legitimacy. They treat him according to the facts in his case, and, therefore, as the legitimate son of the Admiral. If they have not sought to establish his legitimacy, it was because nobody contested it. The legitimacy of Don Fernando is plainly seen from the *ensemble* of the facts.

First, in the internal relations of the family, as well as in its exterior and public relations, no difference except that of primogeniture is made between Diego and Fernando Columbus. Their appearance in society was at the same time, in the absence of their father. They were presented together at Court the same day, by their paternal uncle, Don Bartholomew, who went for them to Cordova.† Both entered with the same title, the same rank, the same service of the household of the Prince Royal. And D. Eustaquio, grandson of Navarrete, acknowledges that Fernando Columbus was, with his brother, one of the greatest

* Document. Diplom. num. xxxii. *Annot. au titu de rente.*

† Fernando Columbus. *History of the Admiral*, chap. lx.

favorites of the prince.* At a later period, both of them pass into the service of the Queen. Far from making the least difference unfavorable to the youngest, it was precisely the latter that Isabella named first her page, before she accorded that favor to the oldest. The nomination of Fernando preceded that of his brother Diego by twenty-four hours.†

The convention which took place between the Crown of Spain and Columbus, in the plain of Granada, the seventeenth of April, 1492, in establishing the inheritance of his dignities in the person of the *oldest* of his sons, shows implicitly that Diego, the child of the first marriage, is not alone. The prologue of the "Journal of Columbus" states that the sovereigns have promised the right of inheritance to the eldest of his sons. The royal decree of the twentieth of May, 1493, which accords royal armorial bearings to Columbus, speaks of his *sons*. The act of *Mayorazgo*, or Entailment, evidently implies his state of marriage. For, on the one hand, he foresees the case that he might have other children besides his two sons, whom he names;‡ and, on the other hand, he does not admit the possibility of another conjugal union, since he does not stipulate any reservation or dower for another wife. This latter condition would have been for that purpose indispensable. At this period the great Admiral, worn out, old, and infirm, could not expect an alliance conformable to his rank, without insuring to his future wife considerable advantages.

The free and natural manner in which Columbus speaks of his two children, the unreserved affection of his language in regard to his son in his official correspondence with the sovereigns, show the total absence of everything like constraint of thought, or of precaution in his words.§

* *Coleccion ineditos para la Historia de España*, por D. Miguel Salva, etc., t. xvi., p. 291.

† *Coleccion Diplomatica*, num. cxxv.

‡ *Institution del Mayorazgo*. Documentos Diplomats. num. cxxvi.

§ *Letter to the Sovereigns*, July 7, 1503, written from Jamaica.

His habit of noticing and praising the precocious talents, and the youthful services of the boy, should suffice to prove the legitimacy of Fernando. Had his birth been shameful, would the Admiral have dwelt complaisantly on this subject? Would he have dared to send him, when a youth, to compliment the Portuguese governor of Arcilla, who had, among his officers, near relations of his first wife, Doña Felippa Mognis de Perestrello? And would this particular circumstance have been related to us by Don Fernando himself? * Could a bastard ever have recalled such a circumstance, — one so humiliating to himself?

The legitimacy of Fernando, shown by the unanimous belief of his cotemporaries, justified by the fostering kindness of Queen Isabella, the regards of the Catholic King, and the particular esteem of the Emperor Charles V., is corroborated by a new proof. The genealogical tree of the family of the Admiral bears the name of Fernando, immediately after that of Diego, his oldest son, and on the same line. †

In the genealogies presented by the Colombos (Columbuses) of Italy before the Spanish tribunals, at the time of the trials for the succession, Fernando was always put in the same branch with Diego. The consultation so often cited of the senator John Peter Sordi, for Balthazar Colombo, proves that the celebrated jurisconsult was far from having the least doubt of the legitimacy of Don Fernando. ‡ In his memorial to the Court of Appeals, dated the fifteenth of July, 1792, a great jurist of Madrid, Don Perez de Castro, rejecting disdainfully, by a marginal note, the insinuation of the attorney De la Palma y Freitas (overruled in

* *Historie del sign. Don Fernando Colombo*, etc., cap. LXXXVII.

† The genealogical trees of the Columbuses that have been prepared for the last three hundred years, distinguish carefully the quality of the persons. *Bastards* and *adulterines* are there so designated; and the name of Don Fernando invariably figures among the legitimate.

‡ *Foannis Petri Sordi consilium*, sect. XI., num. 261.

the first instance), declared that in no part of the process did he find the proof that Fernando was illegitimate.* On the genealogical tree of the Colombos of Cucarro, which was shown us in Rome by their last descendant, the name of Fernando is by the side of that of Diego, under the same title; and never was there, in his family, the least doubt of the legitimacy of Don Fernando. Monseigneur Luigi Colombo recognizes very expressly the marriage of Columbus with the noble mother of Don Fernando.† Finally, these assurances received their last irrefragable guarantee from the very hand of Columbus himself. In a letter to persons whose duty he considered it was to support his reclamations at the Court of Spain, he reminds them that for the service of the Crown he quitted all,—WIFE AND CHILDREN,‡—and never enjoyed the sweetness of living with his family.

The original of this letter, wholly written by the hand of the Admiral, exists to this day. A copy of it forms part of the Diplomatic Collection printed in 1825; and, strange to tell, the autographic authenticity of this document, which so peremptorily refutes Navarrete, has been admitted by Navarrete himself in his official capacity! He could not have been ignorant of it. But, blinded by prejudice, he looked at it without reading it, without comprehending it; he limited himself to recognizing the writing, not seeing what overwhelming testimony this august autograph would bring against his calumnies.§ (See ADDENDUM.)

* *Pleytos de los descendientes de Colon.*

† *Patria e biografia del Grande Ammiraglio*, pp. 208, 299.

‡ Christopher Columbus. “Y deje mucher y fijos que jamas vi por ello.”—*Col. Diplom.*, num. cxxxvii.

§ It was not alone the royal historiographer Don Bautista Muñoz, and the archivist General Don Thomas Gonzales, who have numbered and classified under No. cxxxvii. this precious autograph. Don Martin Navarrete has added to it a note stating that this piece was wholly written by the hand of the Admiral, *En papel de mano del Almirante D. Cristobal Colon.*

SECTION VI.

To continue further our refutation of the slander, appears to us useless. The facts speak for themselves. Without examining the details, it is evident that when one is willingly deceived in regard to the person, the family, and the civil *status* of Columbus,—when one has unappreciated his great soul, despised his genius, and calumniated the yearnings of his heart,—we are left nothing to presume from that his work has been judged by him with impartiality.

And, in truth, those who have written the life of Columbus, yielding to the magisterial influence of which we have spoken, have wandered away from, or been silent about important facts, when they have not distorted them to make them square with their preconceived opinions of historic expositions. After having denied the supernatural aids which were visibly manifested in the grand dramas of his career, they refuse attributing human genius to Columbus himself. Solely, in declaring him a stranger to the sciences and to mathematics, they accord him great sagacity of observation. From fear of painting him as a hero, they have travestied him as a common man, systematically despoiled him of everything that constitutes grandeur, and not only have they accused him of ignorance, of ingratitude, of bigotry, of presumption, of littleness, and of puerile vanity, but they have also wished to lessen the exterior acts of his life; diminish the obstacles, shorten the conflicts, and lessen the perils over which his inspirations knew how to triumph. They did not perceive that in looking at things through the spectacles of positivism, they fell into the mediocre, and consequently into the ridiculous and the impossible.

Could a man endowed solely with great tenacity and power of observation know how to do what Columbus has done? Does not the sole sublimity of his name speak of his heart? This renown of Columbus, the most immense,

the most certain, an inexhaustible source of celebrity which the course of ages and generations cannot extinguish,— is it not already a pledge of the incomparable superiority of his work? Is not the workman always greater than his work, whether by the power of his conception, or by the divine favor which fecundates it?

It is too much forgotten that the work effected by Columbus is unequalled in history. He could have imitated nobody, and nobody could repeat his acts. That which he has once done has changed the relations of peoples during the whole course of time. This mission, unique in the series of ages, could not have been conferred by chance, or by pure science. To accomplish it, a mathematical relation between the sublimity of the man who undertook it, and the incalculable grandeur of his work, would have been absolutely necessary, — a grandeur of which human genius, even at this day, cannot measure the compass, or point out the limits.

Let us sum up our observations :

It is contrary to common sense that incredulity should explain faith; and that Catholic genius should be presented to our regards by Protestantism.

Apart from any details, a little reflection should suffice to overturn totally the system of the biographers of Columbus; and, therefore, the necessity of a new, full, and complete history of the discovery of the New World has been much felt. This necessity, which so much resembles a duty, has been deeply felt in the Eternal City. And we proceed to respond to it, as much for the love of truth, as for the honor of our country; since, in real fact, as has been said by De Maistre, "Truth always needs France."

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

Time and Place of the Birth of Columbus. — *Status* of his Family. —
His Childhood and Education. — His first services on Sea. —
His accidental landing in Portugal.

SECTION I.

A DARK CLOUD has been cast around the cradle of Christopher Columbus. His genealogy, his true country, and the exact date of his birth, are still matters of discussion to the present hour, without any of the numerous writings on these topics having hitherto definitively elucidated them. The author of the most popular history of Columbus, Washington Irving, begins with these lines: "Nothing certain is known in regard to the first years of Christopher Columbus. The time, the place of his birth, are enveloped in equal obscurity. His ancestors are known no better; and such has been the fatiguing sterility of the commentators, that it is difficult to find the truth, in the midst of the mazes of conjectures with which it is surrounded."

And after these words, in place of presenting his readers with a clew to bring them out from this labyrinth of perplexities, he himself, in his turn, only increases their embarrassments, in increasing their incertitude.

As regards ourselves, the obscurity which several causes

have thrown around the birth of the man who has doubled our knowledge of the globe, does not appear to us to be impenetrable. As soon as one is completely unconcerned about the rival pretensions of families, of cities, and provinces, who claim the honor of having given him birth, he comes to recognize with certainty the origin of him whose destiny was without equal in the world. Let us endeavor, then, to fix definitively the time and the place of this birth, which was attended with such grand consequences to the whole universe.

It is by the date of the death of Columbus that we come to point out precisely that of his birth. It is known that he died in Valladolid the twentieth of May, 1506, at the age of seventy-one years. He was born, then, in 1435. According to the manuscript history of the veracious chronicler, D. Andres Bernaldez, curate of Los Palacios, who had received the Admiral of the Indies at his house, and seen with his own eyes his notes and charts, Columbus must have been born about 1435. This date perfectly coincides with the one assigned by the learned author of the *Ecclesiastical History of Plaisance*, the canon Pietro-Maria Campi. It is very nearly the same date that has been assigned for his birth by the last descendant of the Colombos of Cucarro, Monseigneur Luigi Colombo, in the work he lately published in Rome. This date of 1435, adopted also by Navarrete, was that which was also already admitted by Count Galeani Napione. It is the only one that is indubitable. It is, besides, in exact relation with the principal events recorded by historians; no fact contradicts it, no document gainsays it. All the facts attest its accuracy. It is, therefore, right to make it our fixed point of departure in our investigations.

As to the birthplace of Columbus, we cannot conceive why it has been so long contested, and so warmly disputed. We have been surprised at the hesitating tone hitherto adopted on this subject. It is time to make this hesitation give place to a precise and peremptory affirmation.

COLUMBUS WAS BORN IN GENOA.*

His father was a Genoese also. He was named Domenico, or Dominic, Columbus, and was the son of John Columbus, who once resided at Quinto, where he appears to have enjoyed a certain degree of competency. The fact of the father of Christopher Columbus being a Genoese, cannot be disputed. It is proved by his own declarations, in many authentic acts, whose originals exist at this day, preserved in the archives of the notary's offices of Savone and Genoa.

Dominic was married to a native of the village of Bassagno, Susana, daughter of James Fantanarossa, who brought him a small fortune. He settled in Genoa, first in a house that was his own property; this house was situated outside the city walls, on the road to Bassagno, which was near it. Dominic Columbus possessed, also, a patrimony in the valley of Nura, and some lots of land in the neighborhood of Quinto. Nevertheless, in order to make up for the slenderness of his income, he carried on the business of wool-combing. He had a place for weaving cloths, in which he employed a workman and an apprentice.

It was in this house, in the suburbs of the city, that Christopher Columbus was born. He was presented to the baptismal font in the ancient church of St. Stephen, then situated on a little hill, and served by Benedictine priests. This church is commonly called St. Stephen di Arco. The popular tradition which has for the last three hundred years designated it as the church in which Columbus was baptized, has, in our days, been fully confirmed.

The family name of Columbus is Italian—Colombo; in Latin it was written Columbus; later, in Spanish, Colon; but we follow the Latin orthography, and write it Columbus.

Some years after, Dominic Columbus having already

* De Lorgues proves this beyond the shadow of a doubt; but his discussion and proofs of the matter are too long for our pages.—B.

several children, considered it would be for his interest to rent out his house to one of those tavern-keepers who take their stand near the entrance into a city, and to remove to the quarter specially occupied by cap-makers, dyers, and wool-combers. For this purpose he leased a small house in Mulcento Street, having a ground floor, besides a hall lighted from the door, contiguous to which there was an apartment which could serve as a shop. The old register of the Republic of Genoa showed this house to be No. 166. It belonged to the religious of the Benedictine order. Several receipt-books of that community, which have escaped the ravages of revolutions, and exist to this day, mention the successive payments made by Dominic Columbus. The last one that appears under his name is for the year 1489. From this period, his son-in-law, James Bavarello, leased the house by virtue of an agreement entered into the twentieth of July, 1489, in the office of the notary, Lorenzo Costa.

Mulcento Street, narrow, rugged, and steep as it was, was at that time the general quarter of cap-makers and workers in woollen cloths. At the present day, in the grave silence of its solitude, it preserves, with some remains of the piety of its ancient inhabitants, which are here and there incrustated in the doors or in the old walls,—a calm and austere aspect, which reminds us of the simple and strong faith of the middle ages.

Dominic Columbus had four sons: Christopher, Bartholomew, Pelligrino, and James. He had also a daughter, who, expecting no better fortune, married a pork-butcher of the vicinity, named James Bavarello, the obscurity of whose condition, when living, withdrew him from the notice of history. Pelligrino died soon after he came to his majority. He worked at the trade of his father. Most writers have forgotten, or been ignorant of, his existence.

It is certain that the ancestors of Columbus belonged to the nobility.

In the veins of the wool-comber there flowed very pure

blood. His ancestors descended from a military stock, originally come from Lombardy, the collateral branches of which had taken root in Piedmont, and on the Plaisantin; whilst others, transplanted into Liguria, found themselves obliged to turn to naval affairs, and to trading. Undoubtedly, in the first half of the fifteenth century, there existed several Colombos, united by ancient parentage; but their conditions becoming widely diverse, their relations to each other partook of their difference of rank. Some attained high positions by their services or their fortune, whilst others occupied only secondary positions, or were even ignored in marine traffic. Such were the parents of John Anthony Colombo, who served in the Indies in quality of Captain, under the Admiral of the Ocean. Others, still, inhabiting the market-towns of Liguria, attended to the cultivation of their small farms. It was these bonds of parentage, and of vicinity, that gave occasion to the pretensions that afterwards arose in regard to the true country of Christopher Columbus.

The coat-of-arms of the Columbuses bore three argent doves, surmounted by the emblem of justice, and having, as a device, these three words: *Fides, Spes, Charitas*; Faith, Hope, Charity. Except in slight shades of difference, these arms were common to the several branches of the ancient Lombardian family.

Several writers have advanced the opinion that at Genoa the business of a wool-comber did not derogate from one's nobility. We have not been able to verify the value of this assertion. Whatever may have been the importance acquired by the body corporate of wool-combers in Liguria, we doubt whether a gentleman of noble descent would have the desire to become aggregated with it. But it is certain that a tradition of dignity, of loyalty, and of honor existed under the roof of the artisan; and that whether or not he had borne the arms of his ancestors, Dominic Columbus always appeared to bear them in his mind and in his conduct. He made his family models of sanctity

and of duty. Respect, filial piety, fraternal affection, modesty in prosperity, courage in adversity, magnanimity, Christian purity, — such were the examples which the wool-comber gave to the world. And he whose limited means obliged him to marry his daughter to a pork-butcher, knew, before leaving this world, that the eldest of his sons had enlarged its known space, and that he was Grand Admiral and Viceroy. It was in his children that it pleased God to bless this industrious old man, who, like another Jacob, after having counted, in the long years of his pilgrimage, some good days, some evil days (and the latter were the most numerous), sees himself with complaisance, at the end of his course, live again in a son who is invested with splendor and transcendent glory.

In beginning to write this history, we love to salute at first the respectable image of this artisan, because he humbly served God and his country, labored diligently, did for the education of his children all that his circumstances permitted, and did not raise them egotistically for himself, but generously knew how to let them depart from him in his old age.

Never has the wool-comber of Mulcento Street hitherto received a word of approbation from the biographers of his son. They have limited themselves to saying, “The parents of Columbus were poor, but honest.” The certificate of morality given by the Protestant school would have been somewhat disparaging, if it were not ridiculous. Is it that honesty alone could have produced the example of those three sons, who, always respectful and grateful, knew, notwithstanding their straitened circumstances, how to solace the old age of their father, who, faithfully united among themselves, were up to the level of the most difficult enterprises, as well as the most elevated positions; who supported grandeurs as naturally as they did reverses, and who never faltered in their duty on any occasion? Do we observe here nothing above simple morality? Do we not perceive there the essence of

nobility, of virtue? Besides, had not the noble origin of the wool-comber been proved, the influence of his example should suffice to testify that an exalted tradition was perpetuated at his fireside, which revealed the nobility of his race, struggling against the misfortunes of life, and the monotony and the fatigue of daily labors.

Although he saw them destined to the labor of their hands, the honest wool-comber wished to give his children all the education his scanty means permitted. Struck with the intelligence of his eldest son, he resolved to second his abilities, and give him the most complete education that was then given. He sent him to the University of Pavia, where his extreme youth was, no doubt, patronized by some member of his family, which, as we have said, was originally from Lombardy. Christopher, at that time, was scarcely ten years old. It was a very tender age for such laborious studies as *natural philosophy*, astrology, and EXTRAORDINARY PHILOSOPHY, — the teaching of which rendered that University celebrated.

Learned researches have been made to know who the masters were from whom the boy learned the elements of the sciences. It has been forgotten that the science of these masters could have profited him but little, for he studied only from the age of nine to twelve years. At fourteen he was already gone to sea; and we know that between his leaving the University and his maritime enrolment, he passed some time as an apprentice, learning the trade of his father. We do not question the merit of these professors; and we will take care not to seek, as others have had the curiosity to do, what influence they exercised on him.

What is certain is, that he was attentive to the lessons of those masters who are at present unknown; and that from his assiduity and precocious intellect he derived fruits enough to utilize afterwards these elementary studies. Having prematurely quitted the University, — no doubt because the resources of his father had failed, — he returned to Genoa, to work at his trade and labor with his father.

Many persons will not believe this; but history is positive in regard to it. After quitting the University benches, he labored as a workman with his father and his brother Bartholomew. The instruction he received at Pavia did not amount to much. The little science that he learned at the Lombardian University is shown by historians. He himself, avows it, and Humboldt demonstrates it. This view is further confirmed by other writers, quoted by M. De Lorgues.

SECTION II.

After leaving the narrow and gloomy streets of Genoa, if one mounts on the ramparts, or if he ascends the rugged mountains that overtop and surround it on every side, leaving it no outlet but to the Mediterranean, constraining it, as it were, to tend that way, he is dazzled by the light vibrating the transparency of the air, impregnated with fragrant odors. The bright azure of the waves playing on the shores of an enchanting basin, and the splendid views of the Ligurian Gulf, elevate the soul in transporting thought to other places, beneath other skies. One feels that, notwithstanding its magnificence, the enclosure of the marble city suffices not for the imagination of its children. He understands that, in fact, the sea is the life, the support, and the force of that city. A general attraction disposed the young men of Genoa to the adventures of the sea. Christopher Columbus, whom an enlightened love of Nature carried to the contemplation of the divine works, and whom a secret instinct urged to the study of geography, preferred the sea to the sedentary and monotonous labors of the family. A particular reason might have determined him in the choice of such a career. Since the loss of their possessions in Lombardy, almost all his ancestors sought their fortune on sea. Some men of his name, and of his blood, had become illustrious in naval service. Besides, the way of the sea was the only road to fortune and to glory for the Genoese.

At this period navigation was in a rude condition. Installation on shipboard made no concessions to the conveniences of life. Space was economized with great strictness. The merchant ship was forced to become somewhat warlike in appearance. It restricted itself to keep the defensive; but, exposed to the pirates of every nation, and to the most unexpected attacks, it was armed, and ready to give an answer when needed. Notwithstanding his small scientific stock brought from the University of Pavia, the young student was obliged, according to the usages of that period, to commence his naval apprenticeship as a cabin-boy. Unheeded in a subaltern rank, it was long practice, close observation, and experience, that alone gave him a theoretical knowledge of the sea. Trained in this rugged school, the knowledge of arms became as familiar to him as that of the winds and of naval manœuvres. Undoubtedly he derived from the frequency of dangers from waves and from men, and from the frequency of complications the most unexpected and the most terrible, that coolness and promptitude of resolution, that surety of glance, and that firmness and precision in commanding, which, on sea, insures the safety of ships.

We know he traversed the whole extent of the Mediterranean; navigated in the Levant,—at that period infested with the pirates of the Archipelago, the Mahometan corsairs, and the freebooters of the Barbary States. In one of the combats, which has not been retraced by history, he received a deep wound, the cicatrix of which, though long forgotten, reopened towards his latter years, and endangered his life. Exposed to the most perilous hazards, he passed several years on the waves, during which period we have no account of the vicissitudes of his life. The first time that a historic document permits us to alight on his trace, he is sailing under the French flag. But already he is a seaman, and one of the officers of the famous Colombo, his grand-uncle, who commanded a fleet for King René, against the Kingdom of Naples, in 1459.

Towards this period, Christopher, the intelligent *élève* of that noble and experienced commander, became, in his turn, master of a ship. King René gave him a command in an expedition that required uncommon boldness and ability. The object in view was to go to Tunis and bear away the *Fernandine*, a galley of the first rank. When he was in the waters of San Pietro, in Sardinia, it was learned that the *Fernandine* was convoyed by two vessels and a carack; this disproportion of forces so much troubled the seamen, that, getting into a state of revolt, they refused going further, and determined to return to Marseilles. Whatever eloquence Columbus may have used, he was not able to overcome their fear; and as he had no material means of making himself obeyed, he had recourse to stratagem. The evening being come, he turned the needle, and caused the sails to be unfurled. The seamen, reassured, thought they sailed for Marseilles; but the next morning, at daybreak, the vessel hove in sight of Carthage, without any of the malcontents suspecting the route they had taken. This act of his youth, related incidentally by himself at the time that he was grand Admiral of the Ocean, paints well his character. We there recognize his intrepidity, his resolution, his address; how little he allowed himself to be stopped by obstacles that come from men; if he cannot surmount them, he goes round them; and the obedience which he cannot obtain openly, he gains possession of and conquers by his ability.

It cannot be doubted that, after having obtained a command, Columbus, during the four years King René employed in the attempt of making a conquest of Naples, continued to serve him. It was particularly on sea that René gained the greatest advantages, and that he had longest to sustain the struggle.

It appears certain that, afterwards, Columbus continued to navigate, sometimes alone, and sometimes with one or the other of the Colombos, his kinsmen. The last day of his naval military life was marked by a dramatic circum-

stance, the consequences of which incline us to believe that this event did not occur but by a special interposition of Providence, in favor of him who was afterwards to be his peaceful and faithful servant.

If Colombo, the old Genoese Admiral, was greatly renowned, Colombo the younger, his nephew, was not less celebrated in the Mediterranean, since he there commanded a squadron against the Mahometans. This circumstance, no doubt, led Christopher to attach himself to him; for, in the midst of the turmoils of his youth, he preserved alive the faith, — the germ of which was developed in his heart by parental example. Besides, the ardor of the Genoese against the Mahometans was inscribed on the walls of the city. Not far from the gateway of St. Andrew, and from Mulcento Street, in which Dominic Columbus resided, we still, at this day, see the street of the Moor-slayers, — *via de Matamoras*.

Concurrent, then, with the fortunes of his kinsman Colombo *il mozo*, or the younger, Christopher, having quitted the seas of the Levant, embarked as an officer in a vessel cruising near the coast of Portugal, to wait there for some Venetian vessels, with rich cargoes. Having given them chase, he attacked them at daybreak, between Lisbon and Cape St. Vincent. The Venetians defended themselves with intrepidity; the combat lasted until evening; and the fury was equal on both sides. Towards nightfall, the Venetian ship took fire; this vessel was hooked by grappling irons to the one commanded by Columbus, to which it was held so fast by iron chains, that it became impossible to separate them. The fire spread rapidly from one ship to the other. All the wooden pumps were vainly put in play. Soon the two ships were burnt, presenting the aspect of a horrible furnace. Now, friends and enemies have no other resource but the sea: Genoese and Venetians dart into it; but the danger had only changed its form. The waves spread out a distance of two leagues before becoming spent on the nearest coast.

After a whole day of fighting, strength naturally became exhausted. How able soever a swimmer Christopher may have been, he would inevitably have perished had not Providence aided him. The waves pushed near his hand one of those large oars, at that time still used to supply the want of sails during calms. By means of this support he was somewhat able to rest himself, maintain himself on the surface, and thus reach the shore. After having thanked God for his safety, he succeeded, with the aid of public charity, in reaching Lisbon, where he knew he should find many of his countrymen. Among these, he had the sweet satisfaction of finding his brother Bartholomew.

CHAPTER II.

Stay of Columbus in Lisbon. — His Marriage with the daughter of a Navigator. — His Voyages to the Canaries, the Azores, and the African Coasts. — His Propositions of Discovery to Genoa, to Venice, to Portugal. — Offers of the King. — His Noble Refusal. — His Return to Italy. — His Departure for Spain.

SECTION I.

ALREADY, for nearly half a century, Portugal, too narrow in her territorial limits, sought an extension of them by sea. She had augmented her domain by several islands far from known shores, in the bosom of the ocean. This success did not represent the sum of the efforts of many reigns. It was solely owing to the patronage of a prince, who, though placed near the throne, did not aspire to it; his only ambition being to serve God and his country.

A French philosopher has justly remarked, that all the great navigators have been Christians. The prince who gave the first impulse to the navigation of the ocean, was a true Catholic.

Don Henry, son of King John, and Grand Master of the Order of Christ, wished to procure for his knights glory in this world, and eternal felicity in the next. While yet very young, he distinguished himself against the Moors, in Africa, on the walls of Ceuta; at a later period, he judged it would be better to convert than to slay them. Notwithstanding his quality of Grand Master of an order instituted to fight against the Mahometans, the enemies of the law of Jesus Christ, he considered he was more obliged to subjugate them to the sweetness of that yoke, than to extend the

states of the kings, his ancestors. He thought of carrying the Gospel to the Moors, and to the idolaters who peopled the shores of Western Africa, which were but little known at that time.

Some partial discoveries were made under the auspices of Don Henry. The Holy See naturally encouraged these discoveries, the twofold object of which was the knowledge of the earth, and the propagation of Christianity. To give the zeal of the prince a pledge of his good-will, the Holy Father conferred on the Crown of Portugal the right of primacy over all the barbarous countries it should discover from Cape Bajador to the East Indies. And at the same time that he menaced with the denunciations of the Church whosoever should dare to thwart these beneficent expeditions, the Holy Father granted a plenary indulgence to all those who, in making part of them, should perish in fulfilling the conditions of it. If the capital of the Christian world applauded these efforts, the maritime cities of Italy, and the republics of the coasts, became concerned about them, but from other motives, seeing that their interests were threatened.

The death of Prince Henry weakened the impulse given to the spirit of discovery. Meanwhile, Lisbon was still the city of maritime progress. It was there that the ablest shipwrights were found; that the best planispheres and works on astronomy were sold, that atlases, and the most exact marine charts, were executed, and where the most capable pilots were most numerous. The name of Pilot, at that time, meant every naval officer who was not the captain of a ship. It was applied even to captains of the second order in the navy. A very large number of mariners, whom the munificence of the prince mathematician attracted to Lisbon, still continued their residence there, notwithstanding the loss of their liberal patron.

It is, therefore, not surprising that Bartholomew Columbus, the brother of Christopher, should have settled there, in order to turn to account his talents in geography, the

preëminence of which cannot be denied. His nephew, Don Fernando, whose great modesty always disposed him to lessen the merits of his family, while saying that he was not highly educated, is obliged to acknowledge his superior judgment, and his art in the construction of spheres.

While waiting for better things, Bartholomew Columbus made his talent for geography sufficiently lucrative. It was with the greatest happiness that he opened his house to his shipwrecked brother. He felt great tenderness and respect for him as his eldest brother. He endeavored to keep him always by him. Nevertheless, this hospitality did not become onerous to him. Christopher wrote a beautiful hand; and he used the crayon and the pencil with no less ability than he did the pen. He also drew charts and plans, occupied himself with copying manuscripts and transcribing rare books, because, though the invention of printing was then known in Portugal, typography was at that time in its infancy; good printers could not be easily found, and therefore books commanded high prices. And as his love for geography and inclination for study had made him familiar with the works that were most esteemed by the reading community of Lisbon, he bought them up to re-sell again, as occasion might require, and thus carried on a small traffic in books. By these means he not only provided for his own needs, but by economy, and the self-denial his filial tenderness imposed on him, he was enabled to sweeten the old age of his father, to whom fortune had not been favorable. The historian Gonzalo Fernandez de Oviedo, his enemy, bears testimony that at Lisbon, and wherever else he was, "he always took care to provide for the wants of his father," notwithstanding the embarrassments of his own situation. The engaging manners of Christopher easily introduced him to seafaring men, and caused him to be warmly welcomed by many Genoese merchants who had settled in Lisbon. He never forgot the kindness of his countrymen, Antonio Vazo and Luigi Centurio Escoto. He remembered the good offices of Paulo de Negro, as well as

the assiduous attentions of the sons of Nicolao Espindola, and he paid their benevolence with immortality, in transmitting to us the obscure names of these estimable merchants.

Dating from his sojourn in Lisbon, except some short phases, the principal events of his life are shown us in an uninterrupted order, and remain fully open to investigation. Properly speaking, it is here his history commences.

After his almost miraculous landing in Portugal, the first fact we notice connected with him concerns his habits of piety. His edifying assiduity in its offices had as a consequence the great event of his life, which was the propitious occasion of his genius becoming developed, his comparative faculties enlarged, his being confirmed in his vocation, and of his holding communications with the learned and the great of the earth.

SECTION II.

Columbus having then finished his thirty-third year, had attained the completion of his physical vigor and of his intellectual endowments. His tall stature gave his robust constitution a manly elegance, which naturally assorted with his character. His long visage presented a pure oval. Although his cheek bones were high, his rounded cheeks softened their contours. The noble largeness of his forehead indicated that of his thought. In his light blue eyes there beamed a limpid serenity. His nose was aquiline. Some freckles on his cheeks gave his ruddy complexion an animated cast. Under the influence of a sole thought for three years, his hair, which was blond, inclining to chestnut, began to turn gray.

His airs in natural relation with his gestures, and his gestures so conformable to his stature, formed a perfect union between his physical and his moral constitution. His mien and manners revealed an innate dignity that could not be doubted. Notwithstanding his modest exterior, he could nowhere pass without being noticed.

To a rare fineness of hearing, he joined a keenness of sight that reached far, and gave him an exact knowledge of distances. His delicacy of taste enabled him to point out differences that were imperceptible to common people. But all these advantages yielded to his delicacy of smell, which discerned immediately the diverse combinations of odors. He admired with tenderness the works of the Creator, sought with eagerness for flowers, birds, and the productions of the sea, and enjoyed in a special manner the odors of vegetation.

Plain in his clothing, Columbus had no other finery of dress than cleanliness. In this he was exquisite. To the absence of stains or rents, or negligence in his clothing, which he knew how to preserve a long time, he endeavored to join whiteness, and often fineness of linen, always slightly perfumed. His attraction for sweet scents never became weakened. He delighted in odoriferous flowers, balsamic gums, perfumes in essence and in powders, and in scented waters.

This elegance of taste was natural to him, like his ability in horsemanship. His sole visage showed his nobleness of mind, and a certain air of authority that struck intelligent eyes. His whole demeanor denoted the perfect gentleman.

Although from the age of fourteen Columbus had been always at sea, or sojourning in the ports with the seamen, he did not participate in their ordinary vices. He detested swearing and indecent songs; drank but little wine; could not bear games of chance; despised effeminate pleasures; had no inclination for the pleasures of the table, and kept on land his frugal habits on shipboard. His extreme frugality made him prefer an almost vegetable regimen. He passed easily from the use of meats to live on bread, rice, eggs, fresh vegetables, dates, etc. To wine he preferred, as a drink, water sweetened with Canary sugar and some drops of orange-flower.

This frugality was accompanied with a habit of order, of arrangement and of punctuality, which prevented him from

putting off until to-morrow what should be done to-day. He knew the value of time. He was never seen acting at random, or outside of the dictates of duty or of good sense. In nothing did he stop at the good, if he expected to be able to arrive at the better.

Affectionate to his relations and friends, affable to those about him, showing his inferiors the kindness of superiority, graced with an urbanity which is not learned on shipboard, his ease of elocution, the graphic turn of his images, his expressions, often hardy, but always happy, rendered his conversation attractive.

Notwithstanding this habitual suavity, Columbus was by nature impatient, and inclined to anger. But this first impulse never injured anybody but himself. Reflection, not less sudden than the transport, mastered the latter, and effectually repressed its sallies. It would appear that this extreme irritability was given him as a test, an occasion, to strive against himself; to subdue his natural inclination; to overcome this internal obstacle before surmounting exterior ones. Trials calculated to produce the greatest impatience were the lot of him who was to be a model of patience itself, in order to accomplish his ever-enduring work.

Remembering his father's example, and his mother's pious recommendations, Christopher preserved on shipboard the Christian habits of his childhood. We know, from his own testimony, how much the sea was an inexhaustible source of his aspirations towards God. From his arrival in Lisbon, he went regularly every morning to mass in the church of All Saints, adjoining a convent of nuns. His air of distinction, and the piety of his demeanor, were remarked through the grating of the cloister. A noble young lady who was there among the boarders, took the most lively interest in him. Wishing absolutely to become acquainted with him, her tender curiosity invented a means of doing so.

Her name was Doña Felippa Perestrello. She was a daughter of Bartholomew Mognis de Perestrello, an Italian

gentleman naturalized in Portugal, an old officer in the king's household, one of the *protégés* of Prince Henry, and who, in his quality of regular mariner, had been in the last expeditions of discovery. In recompense for his maritime services, the patronizer of the navigation, Don Henry, had him appointed governor of Porto Santo, and authorized him to colonize that island, where large possessions were granted him in perpetuity. Yet, because he was deficient in sufficient capital, the colonization scheme was fettered from the commencement. The agricultural works were arrested from a cause as serious as it was ridiculous. Some rabbits that were taken to the island, in a short time multiplied to such an extent that the rapidity of their propagation far exceeded the destruction of them by the colonists, as yet too few in number. These little quadrupeds would eat all the vegetables, destroying at night the plantations, and marring the efforts of the laborers.

The government of Porto Santo scarcely brought Perestrello anything but cares and expenses. He died, ruined by the sterile extent of his domains, leaving with his widow three daughters, whose graces and virtues constituted their principal fortune.

This want of fortune did not prevent Columbus from offering his hand to Doña Felippa. From the time of the offer until the marriage there elapsed a pretty long interval, probably in order that the widow of Perestrello should have time to make full inquiries about her future son-in-law, and take precautions against her daughter's marrying a person of inferior rank. This circumstance shows us once more that, notwithstanding the trade of his father, Columbus descended from an ancient stock. Not only did the marriage take place with the consent of the Perestrello family, but after the union of the two spouses the mother-in-law took them to reside with her in her own dwelling.

Christopher continued to work at his charts and his manuscripts to gain their daily bread, the marriage portion of his wife being scarcely sufficient for their living.

Nevertheless, the rank his father-in-law had occupied, and the relations arising from that honorable alliance, gave him access to the highest quarters. One circumstance, until this day unrecorded by biographers, attests it beyond doubt. King Alphonsus V., who, without undertaking maritime expeditions, still, from tradition and instinct, interested himself about naval affairs, cheerfully admitted into his presence this foreign pilot, whose conversation captivated him. Columbus spoke to him about the natural sciences and maritime adventures. One day, at the end of a conversation on cosmographic affairs, and perhaps to confirm the Genoese in his ideas, the King showed him some reeds of an enormous size, foreign to any climate of Europe, which a storm had driven on the shore of the Azores. This fact, apparently insignificant, was still very explicative.

Although the idea of his plan was not developed in a complete manner until the fourth year of his sojourn in Portugal, we can assert that he had already conceived the project of examining the whole of this earth; for this man never was inconsistent with himself. In examining into the secret of his life, we find him always the same. That which he was in his advanced age, he was in his youth. The time of his birth is known only by that of his death; the movements of his youth are known only by the revelations of his adult age; and we do not fully know the ideas of his mature age but by the thoughts of his last years. He has written that he who follows the business of navigating the sea, feels the desire of penetrating into the secrets of the world. This declaration of his old age tells us of the pre-occupations of his adult age as well as those of his youth. Here we have an involuntary disclosure of those long years he passed on sea, without material profit to his fortune.

How wonderful are the ways in which Providence acts! It draws from a disaster a benefit for him who appears to have been its victim. Columbus finds himself carried, against his will, to the centre of those ideas that were to expand his views, among a people who are given to making

discoveries, and to acquire notions more and more advanced in regard to the ocean, and the regions of the south.

The idea that increased silently within him, the principle which reflection had fecundated, the study and the impassioned contemplation of the divine works, received soon, in the bosom of the family circle, a rapid development. In their friendly chattings, his mother-in-law, a lady of eminent piety, and very zealous for the cause of the Church, struck with his desire to discover unknown countries, recounted to him the life of her husband, who had been an able mariner. She told him how he had coöperated in the discovery of several islands. She confided to him the notes and the journals of his voyages. From the observations they contained, Columbus soon drew a support for his project. He examined the whole of the progress of the Portuguese on the coast of Guinea, and the route they followed to arrive there. Some time after, he embarked with Doña Felippa for her sterile possessions at Porto Santo, and remained there for a certain time. It was there that his first son, Diego, was born.

Surrounded by the immensity of the ocean, — an image of the Infinite, — under the dazzling light of a tropical sun, the genius of Columbus matured in the depths of his thoughts a superhuman idea, — a project bolder than that of any known heroism. What he had seen, what he had heard, served only to corroborate the justness of his inductions. His habits, his tastes, his family connections, seemed to be pre-arranged for the furtherance of the plan which was elaborated in the depths of his reflections.

The second sister of Doña Felippa had also her claims on the possessions of Porto Santo. She became the wife of a noble mariner, Pedro Correa, who was governor of the island. During their conversations Columbus could communicate to this mariner his cosmographic inductions, and avail himself of his observations. Pedro had occasion to make some voyages to the farthest islands of the Atlantic, far from the African coast. He had been to Madeira and

the Azores. He had passed to the coast of Guinea, visited the mouth of the Golden River, *el Rio d'oro*, sojourned at the fortress of St. George of the Mine; extending, thus, the domain of his experience and the scale whence to draw his comparisons.

Pedro Correa informed him of his having seen at the island a piece of wood delicately worked, and pushed towards the shore by the western wind, as if it had come from the other side of the ocean. At the Azores, Pedro had learned that by the west winds the waves had pushed to the coasts of Graciosa and of Fayal some large pine-trees of an unknown species. He was informed that at the Isle of Flowers there were found on the strand two corpses, whose features were different from those of the islanders. It was pretended that barks had been met with, full of men of an unknown race. An officer of the Portuguese marine, Martin Vincente, told him that at a distance of four hundred and fifty leagues from Europe, towards the west, he had drawn from the waves a piece of wood perfectly sculptured, which a western breeze had for several days pushed in sight of his vessel. Another seaman, Antonio Leme, who had married at Madeira, informed him, that having sailed directly for the west, he had seen three islands at the extremity of the western line.

This information, which has been considered as having a great influence on the determinations of Columbus, was only a stimulant to his attention. These reports had no solidity, no cohesion, among themselves, and therefore they had no influence on his decisions. And he who collected them knew how to assign them their just value.

In the first place, he considered the islands of which Leme spoke as pure optical illusions. He supposed that at most they must be rocks, which, seen at a certain angle and in certain atmospheric conditions, might have simulated the appearance of land; or rather, that they were some of those floating islands covered with trees mentioned by certain authors, and among others by Pliny and Juventius

Fortunatus, and which moved in the ocean at the mercy of the winds. In reality, he soon ascertained that the venturesome excursion of Martin Vincente was only a piece of bragging, as he was never more than a hundred leagues from the coasts. As for those sculptured pieces of wood, those gigantic reeds, and pines of unknown species, and those corpses belonging to an unknown race, which the western winds had pushed to the Azores and the Canaries, their testimony established nothing positive; for they might have been carried from the unexplored parts of Africa into the high seas of the equatorial regions, and thence driven on the islands by western winds. Besides, during many years of voyages and of transient residence in those latitudes, he had never seen or touched anything like them himself. In these indices all became reduced to hearsays. Irving is obliged to confess that these facts "could not have been known by Columbus but only after he had formed his opinion, and could have served only to confirm it."

However the case may have been, from the year 1474 his resolution to set out for the discovery of lands which he had a presentiment of existing in the west, was fully formed. Through the agency of a Tuscan residing in Lisbon, he opened a correspondence with one of the greatest celebrities of Italy, Paul Toscanelli, a Florentine physician, a mathematician and a cosmographer, who was familiarly admitted into the pontifical court during his visits to Rome, and whose advice the King of Portugal requested on subjects connected with geography and navigation.

Toscanelli, a man of ardent zeal for the advancement of science, was incited to the study of mathematics by his relations with an old artist, goldsmith, sculptor and engineer, named Brunellesco, who raised aloft and covered with marble the admirable cupola of Santa Maria del Fiore, in Florence. Toscanelli devoted himself to the study of nature. After having read all the narrations of

travellers, his relish for cosmography drew him into relations with the travellers of various nations who arrived in Italy, and went to Rome, the centre of Christianity and the permanent source of civilization.

From the only two fragments that have come down to us of the correspondence between Columbus and Toscanelli, it is seen:—

First. That previously to the month of June, 1474, Columbus had communicated to the learned Florentine his project of navigating westwards. Toscanelli forwarded to him a copy of a letter which a few days before he had sent the canon Fernando Martinez in answer to one the latter had written him on the part of the King of Portugal. Now, this letter was dated the twenty-fifth of June, 1474.

Secondly. That Toscanelli took a lively interest in the letters of Columbus; that he judged his reaching the Orient by sailing westwards a grand and noble idea; and that already Columbus had mentioned to him the invaluable advantages that would result from it to Christianity.* We beg our readers to remark this fact and the date; for, in this single word *Christianity*, were summed up the object, the completion, and the recompense of the idea of Columbus.

Eighteen months had elapsed, during which the project was matured.

SECTION III.

In 1476, Columbus, having attained his fortieth year, resolved to attempt the realization of his plan. For that purpose his eyes naturally turned to his own country. He was desirous of associating her in the honor of such a discovery. Some Portuguese writers have pretended that Columbus had first offered to Portugal the first fruits of his project. Some historians, who have not been able to comprehend this sublime character, have repeated it after

* Second letter of Paul Toscanelli to Christopher Columbus.

them; but the patriotism of Columbus was too sincere, that he should not at first have thought of that city to which family affections, and the endearments of his childhood, had attached him.

It is certain that he wished his country, in preference to all others, should reap the fruit of his discoveries. He came, then, to Genoa, and proposed his plan to the Senate. He would obligate himself that if he should be supplied with some equipped vessels, he would pass through the strait of Gibraltar and pursue his way westward into the Atlantic Ocean, until he would find the land where spices grow, and thus make the circuit of the world. But the cosmographic reasons which he advanced could not be appreciated by the noble members of that body. The Genoese, as able as they were intrepid in the basin of the Mediterranean, ventured but little on the ocean. The progress which the Portuguese had daily made in geography had yet done them no injury. They esteemed themselves masters in the art of navigation, thought they could not be surpassed, and looked on the offer of their countryman as a dream. They made a pretext of the emptiness of the treasury, exhausted by considerable armaments; and in order, perhaps, to abate the pretensions of Columbus, they told him that this desire for discoveries was nothing new for the Senate; that already many an explorer had paid with his life for his daring curiosity. The archives of the republic would prove the fact. There, it could be seen that two hundred years before the proposition now submitted to the council, that two captains of the highest nobility, Tedisio Doria and Ugolino Vivaldi, had departed for the great ocean without there being ever after any account of their fate.

Refused by the Senate of Genoa, Columbus, who wished absolutely to make Italy the beneficiary of his discovery, passed, it is said, to Venice; the republic of St. Mark appearing to him, as regarded finance and marine, to be in a way to second his views. But, notwithstanding his

overtures and his scientific proofs, the Council did not accede to his offer.

SECTION IV.

Thus dismissed by Venice, as he had been by Genoa, Columbus repaired to Savone, to visit and console his father, then upwards of seventy years of age.

We say Savone, and not Genoa, because, previously to the year 1469, Dominic Columbus had left the "marble city" to settle at Savone; later, he returned to Genoa. This intermediary residence, which lasted more than seventeen years, appears to us to be the principal cause that has contributed to the incertitude and the errors of historians in regard to the true country of Christopher Columbus.

How different are the fortunes of men in this world! Some, from the outset, find in decent comforts the rewards of industry, of foresight, and economy; others, notwithstanding the regularity of their labors, and the privations they patiently endure, never break the yoke of the painful labor to which they seem doomed. Their recompense is reserved wholly for eternity. They receive, here below, only the pledges of the immortal hope inherent in the consolations of faith. The life of Dominic Columbus was only an unceasing struggle against obscure tribulations. His pecuniary embarrassments, and the ill-success of his industry, persuaded him that he would succeed better in Savone than in Genoa. The unfortunate easily become the sport of illusions.

The sojourn of Columbus with his parents at this time, was about a year. He was as much attached, and as submissive to them, as he was in his childhood; he aided them from his straitened resources, and was so identified with them, living under the same roof, and taking part in the same labors, that he was considered as belonging to the corporation of wool-combers. But it is certain that in this humble dwelling he drew marine charts, and copied manu-

scripts, which, from time to time, he took to Genoa, where he bought and sold printed books.

SECTION V.

If the double refusal he received, and perhaps the impossibility of his having immediate recourse to another State, with the chance of success, caused Columbus to postpone his project, he did not the less assiduously continue his observations, or the less seek to enlarge the sphere of his cosmographic comparisons. We see him crossing the German Ocean, and advancing to the Polar Seas. In February, 1474, he was a hundred leagues beyond Iceland, and verified some phenomena interesting to hydrography. From the sombre horizons of the North, from the *Ultima Thule* of the ancients to the splendid skies of the tropics, with his powerful faculty of generalization, he united together in his memory the harmonies of land and sea, seeking to penetrate beyond the poetry of appearances the great laws of the globe. Passing from the contemplation of the works of God to the investigation of the works of men, during the brief periods of his stay on land, he consecrated to the study of the writings of philosophers, historians, and naturalists, every hour that was not employed in copying manuscripts, and constructing spheres for gaining his daily bread.

He thus pursued his voyages, from which it does not appear that he gained any other profit than a superior experience in navigation. He continued his life of hardship and labor until the time came when the King of Portugal, John II., appeared to wish to revive the traditions of his grand-uncle, Don Henry, of glorious memory.

This monarch had gathered in his marine some pilots of the first rank, real mariners, such as Diego Cam, Bartholomew and Peter Diaz. Like his grand-uncle, he welcomed the services of all foreigners of eminent abilities. He wished to extend his conquests to the Indies. The energy of his mind, and his penetration, enabled him to divine merit. It

was not difficult for Columbus, when the moment became favorable, to obtain a lengthy audience for the exposition of his plan. His alliance with two governors of Porto Santo, and his antecedent relations with the King's father, obtained for him a kind reception. At the first audience, and from the beginning, John, surprised at the novelty of a plan that upset all the received ideas in cosmography, showed himself but little disposed to enter into his views. But later, during other conversations, the King, weighing the arguments of Columbus, comprehended that there was at the bottom of his proposition something immense and superior. From his elevation of thought, his knowledge of men, and his relish for the natural sciences, the monarch felt disposed in his favor, and determined to bear the expenses of an expedition. Nevertheless, before making an engagement, he wished to know positively what remuneration Columbus would demand in case of success.

Portugal encouraged discoveries by great liberalities. Ordinarily, the government of the island, or of the region discovered, was conferred on him who had taken possession of it in the name of the Crown. Sometimes this dignity was increased by some title of honor. But it was not with the like compensation that this man, who was drawing charts and copying manuscripts for the support of his family, would be satisfied. In his eyes this recompense appeared only shabbiness; it seemed to him it would depreciate the grandeur of his discovery. He laid his conditions, then, before him. They were so royal that the monarch became a little offended; and before subscribing to them, he determined to submit to a discussion the probabilities of success.

He charged with this examination a commission composed of three members: Diego Ortiz de Cazadilla, Bishop of Ceuta; Roderigo, his own physician; and a Jew named Joseph, also a physician, and a master in cosmography. If Columbus required great honors, he required no less great riches, for he had a great thought to satisfy, and this satis-

faction was the only recompense he judged worthy of his enterprise. The revealer of the globe will be justified in his incomparable ambition by every Christian soul.

In its report, the scientific commission concluded to reject the proposition of the Genoese. It regarded the project as a baseless dream. Nevertheless, the elevation of mind which distinguished John, pleaded, without his being aware of it, the cause of Columbus. Instinctively he had faith in this stranger, so poor, and so firm in his demands. Notwithstanding the advice of the commission, he continued to consider seriously about the plan of Columbus. He accordingly convoked a high council, which was composed of the notables of the kingdom.

The project was then examined less as to its execution than as regarded its advantages to the Portuguese nation. The discussion became general as to the direction to be given the royal marine. The sitting was animated, and almost stormy. Prelates assisted at it, and among them was the Bishop of Ceuta, doubly influential by his science and his official title as confessor to the King. His advice must naturally have had great weight; he had already, as president of the cosmographic commission, examined thoroughly the mechanism of the plan, — the object of the present discussion. He declared that the reasons given by Columbus were not solid enough for a sage and prudent prince to engage in such an enterprise, without some previous experimentation.

Leaving out of sight the religious object of Columbus, the prelate entered generally and warmly into the debate, pronouncing against all new projects of discovery. Letting the motives of a narrow and over-cautious prudence prevail over the patriotism and the Christian zeal that could have inspired the project, he treated the question dryly, as a minister of finance, who ought, above all considerations, to make the expenses balance the receipts. He saw in the emptiness of the treasury a salutary obstacle to enterprises which hitherto were more honorable than productive. He maintained

that, far from seeking lands so distant, it would be better policy to conceal their existence, and the route to them, because the attraction of the novelty could not fail in exciting the warlike spirit of the Portuguese, generally disposed for extraordinary things, and that in a short time colonization would depopulate the kingdom; that to pursue the way of discoveries was to weaken the interior before the exterior was strengthened, and to expose the country to invasion; and that it was wiser, and at the same time more glorious, to fight the infidels in Barbary,—those enemies whose vicinity was always attended with danger.

This language, breathing a cold circumspection, based on the calculations of arithmetic, irritated to the quick the patriotism of the assembly. Pedro de Meneses, Count of Villareal, and knight of the Order of Christ, replied with spirit, that Portugal was no longer in her infancy, that her princes were not so impoverished that they could not furnish the expenses for the expedition of Columbus; that from no cause should the career so happily opened by Don Henry be arrested; that it would redound to the everlasting glory of Portugal to have penetrated the mysteries and sounded the depths of the Atlantic Ocean, so formidable to other nations; that thus would be avoided the idleness that is ordinarily engendered by a prolonged peace. It was to outrage the Portuguese name, to menace with imaginary perils those men who, in dangers the most real and the most grave, showed so much valor and intrepidity.

Coming afterwards to the object proposed by Columbus, the Count replied that this plan having chiefly in view the propagation of the Catholic faith, he was astonished that a prelate so religious as was the Bishop of Ceuta should dare to oppose it. Would it not perhaps be to refuse God, to reject this offer? Would it not at least be doing great injury to neglect this opportunity of making the sacred voice of the Gospel resound from pole to pole, in taking as an organ the Portuguese nation, whose princes could, in recompense for their zeal, hope for great accessions of empire, and that

glory which insures immortality? In his pious enthusiasm the Christian knight added, that, "Soldier as he was, he dared, as if he at that moment heard a voice and a spirit from heaven, foretell the sovereign who would attempt this enterprise a happy success, a greater power and a vaster glory in the future, than ever was obtained by the most celebrated heroes or the most fortunate monarchs."

This discourse was cheered by unanimous acclamations. But the opinion of the Bishop of Ceuta was unfavorable to Columbus even as to the means of execution. His well-known ability in matters connected with nautical science caused the Council, without any adequate discussion of it, to lose sight of the project, in the midst of a question considered of more vital importance to the Portuguese nation, to wit: the renewing of the expeditions commenced by Don Henry, and suspended in the last reign. Contrary to the advice of the bishop, the Council gave its opinion in favor of discoveries, but it remained completely silent about the project of Columbus.

The sitting of this Council is a precious monument in the history of Columbus. It shows that at that period the diffusion of the Gospel was already the avowed and definite object of his enterprise.

The light and disdainful manner in which the high Council, on the authority of one of its members, had rejected the project of Columbus, satisfied neither the justice nor the enlightened judgment of King John. To condemn was not to judge. The conversations of the Genoese cosmographer returned to his mind, and he continued to reflect on them.

But time passed on.

Nothing came from the Court to put an end to the uncertainty. Columbus, firm and resolute, girded with that unconquerable patience which serves as armor for strong souls, gaining his bread by the labor of his pen and of his compass, and cultivating his intellect from every book he traded in, acquired, during this forced inaction, an amount of knowledge not less varied than it was solid.

At length the King, by his own reflection, was led to determine absolutely to risk the enterprise. What still held him back was the exorbitant remuneration demanded by the Genoese. In this perplexity one of his counsellors suggested to him a means of reconciling his desire for the expedition with what was called the dignity of the Crown. This means consisted in furnishing secretly with the plan and instructions of Columbus a good Portuguese pilot, and to send him for the discovery in the route indicated. Knowledge once had of the land sought by Columbus, there would be no longer any obligation of according him a great recompense. At length King John, alas! forgot one day that he was a gentleman; and the unhappy counsellor, by whose influence he was led astray, was Doctor Diego Ortiz de Cazadilla. The fact is but too well attested.

A ray of deceitful hope came to light up the laboriously monotonous life led by Columbus, who was always waiting. A message from the scientific commission invited him to present without delay the details of his project, with the basis and proofs, in such a manner that the theory, and the means of executing his plan, could be thoroughly examined. Incapable of suspecting a felony in so high a quarter, Columbus delivered without distrust the plan, the notes, the charts, — in a word, the means of executing his enterprise. Immediately after, one of the ablest captains of the Portuguese marine was despatched with a caravel to go apparently to revictual the isles of Cape Verd, but with secret instructions to sail for the west, for the discovery of unknown lands, conformably to the indications with which he was furnished.

The greatest secrecy shrouded this spoliation of genius. But if Columbus was defrauded of his scientific data, he was not deprived of his firmness, his faith, his superiority of glance, or his mysterious endowment received from on high for the accomplishment of his work. After some days of navigation boldly continued to the west, the crew commenced becoming astonished at the extent, and alarmed at

the route. These men trembled before immensity. A tempest that had arisen came to add to their terrors,—the Lord was not with them. The distracted ship turned back in her course, and returned shamefully to the port whence she had set out. Then, as it commonly happens in similar cases, cowards became braggarts and banterers. Returned to port, they turned into mockery the project of the Genoese. It was nothing, they said, but a vain extravagance. Their sole boasting betrayed, later, the secret of this almost sacrilegious crime.

The shaft of this felony entered deeply into the heart of Columbus. But he was already accustomed to the sufferings of the heart. Some time before, in the midst of his trials, death came to deprive him of the associate of his hopes, the mother of his son, the noble Felippa,—the only consolation of his poor fireside. Columbus remained silent, and looked up to Heaven.

Meanwhile, the King came to know that the caravel had not sailed the number of days or of leagues marked in the instructions filched from Columbus. He desired to renew the negotiation. He would now accord all that he had refused for so long a time. But, on his part, notwithstanding his poverty, Columbus had determined never to treat with a court capable of such infamy. He feigned not to understand the new dispositions of the King. He continued in the isolation of his obscure occupations. But knowing from a good source that the monarch was going to bind him to his enterprise by a treaty, and being determined not to yield, and having everything to fear from the counsellors of the Crown should he persist in his refusal, he noiselessly turned into cash the property of his wife, and prudently prepared for his departure. Towards the end of 1484 he fled secretly from Lisbon, taking with him his young son, Diego, whose delicate features recalled to mind the beauty of his mother.

It was by sea that Columbus escaped from Portugal; he directed his course to Genoa.

Notwithstanding the refusal of the most serene Republic, which he had the pain of experiencing some years before, his patriotism prompted him to encounter anew the doubts and the disdains of his native city. His desire of insuring to his country the immense advantages of his discoveries, induced him to renew his applications to the Senate. But some serious difficulties turned the government from a project that at least was extraordinary. The resources of the Republic did not permit its diminishing its fleet by some ships to attempt an expedition which no precedent justified. Columbus derived from this voyage only the happiness of seeing his respectable father at Savone, of presenting him with his grandson, and of begging the blessing of the old wool-comber on the head of that child, who was one day to commingle his blood with that of the two royal houses of Spain and of Portugal.

In listening to the projects of his son, the heart of the old wool-comber certainly thrilled with exultation. For, if Dominic Columbus knew the refusal of the two Republics and the cupidity of Portugal, he also knew the firmness of resolution, the ardent faith of his son, and even had a confused presentiment of his scientific superiority. He knew Christopher had projected the tour of the earth to arrive thus among idolatrous nations, and make the standard of Salvation to shine before their eyes! These secret thoughts renewed the heart of the old man with noble hopes. Such grandeurs foreseen from the threshold of the tomb, must have changed into a resplendent morning dawn the twilight of his last days. They were at the same time an indemnity for his long tribulations, and a recompense for the Christian education he had given his children.

After having, during his short stay, loaded with marks of the utmost tenderness the venerable old man, and provided for his wants during his absence, Christopher cast his eyes on the Christian monarchies of Europe, to choose the crown with which he would associate the honor of executing his scheme.

By her zeal in defending the faith, her intrepidity in repelling the Moors, her chivalrous character, her maritime resources, and especially the great renown of her two sovereigns, Ferdinand of Arragon and Isabella of Castile, then reigning together, Spain appeared to him to merit the preference. From that time he engaged himself tacitly to her, and regarded himself as bound to her. Then, during the first east wind, he embarked for that kingdom, without having any acquaintance there,—without any letter of credit or of recommendation; solely confiding himself to the protection of Providence.

CHAPTER III.

Influence of Isabella on the Destinies of Spain.

SPAIN commanded, at that time, the destinies of the whole Catholic world. Her struggle against the Koran, the zeal of her crusade undertaken on the soil of Europe, excited the sympathies of the whole Christian world. In applauding this heroic effort, a presentiment was experienced that something grand would be the recompense of a faith so heroic.

One cannot well examine the annals of the navigation and the colonization of the New World, without the sweet name of Isabella coming to his memory; for she was the medium of the Discovery, as the man who submitted his plan to her was providentially destined to be its organ.

Here M. De Lorgues enters on a lengthy account of the debased condition of Spain before the reign of Isabella; shows how she created the Spanish power; the impulse she gave to literature; her regeneration of the national spirit; and then he gives a lively and beautiful picture of that lady, who was undoubtedly the grandest of modern sovereigns. But the details, though highly interesting in themselves, we are obliged to pass over for want of space, and because they more particularly belong to the personal history of Isabella rather than to that of Columbus.

Isabella was the living personification of the chivalrous genius of her time and of her nation. No lady on the throne joined a more sincere faith to a most consummate prudence, or shone there with a more unaffected loyalty. A kind of benediction appeared manifestly to attend her projects as well as her acts. Isabella could always do

when she willed, and she always willed when she could do. Success crowned all her undertakings. While surrounding herself for her service with persons of the highest capacity and of sincere devotedness, God willed that the wisdom of her counsels should still surpass that of her counsellors.

By Isabella was effected the chief act of European politics,—the expulsion of the Crescent. And by Isabella was effected the most prodigious event of humanity,—that which, in doubling its terrestrial domain, enlarged, in a tenfold degree, the sphere of its scientific investigations.

CHAPTER IV.

Arrival of Columbus at the Franciscan Convent of La Rabida. —
The Friendship between the Father Superior and him. — He sets
out for the Court.

SECTION I.

AT half a league from Palos, in sight of the ocean, arises a steep promontory, surrounded with a belt of vineyards studded with fig-trees, and the summit of which was crowned with pines. Like the nest of a dove among cypresses, a monastery, concealed by the forest, darted its steeple above the tops of the trees, whence was exhaled an odor, the sweetness of which united the odors of the thymes and lavenders that grew at their feet.

This monastery, which was then inhabited by some religious of the Order of St. Francis, was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. It was called Santa Maria de la Rabida. It was constructed on the ruins of one of those temples that paganism loved to erect in groves and on high places. It may be seen that it became enlarged at different periods, as occasion required, without regard to symmetry or architecture. The enclosure contained two cloisters, a chapel, a portal, and a garden.

From the roofing of the convent, the cupola of which, surrounded by a balustrade, had formerly served as an observatory, the view embraced a large horizon.

In July, 1485, there was set over this convent, as Father Superior, a man towards whom his cotemporaries were guilty of ingratitude, but who will not be forgotten in this history.

Subject to the rule of his institute with his whole heart,

this religious offered to his community the example of a true disciple of St. Francis, and the renown of his piety passed beyond the walls of the enclosure of La Rabida. He was suddenly called to Court. Queen Isabella had sometimes requested his counsel; she held him in such high esteem that she appointed him her confessor. But the humble Franciscan could not bear the bustle of the Court. This monk aspired only to the quiet regularity of his cloister, and his importunities at last obtained for him leave to reënter it. The Queen esteemed him, not only as a religious of a holy life, as a spiritual guide, and as a great theologian, but she also honored him for his modesty, which could not altogether conceal his science. She considered him an able astronomer* and an excellent cosmographer. The evidence which she bore to his science, and to his meekness of character, has come down to us.

This Franciscan's name was Juan Perez de Marchina. His fervent piety had not suppressed his inclination for mathematics, and his knowledge of the exact sciences did not detract from his taste for letters. The extent and variety of his learning cannot be doubted. The arch-chronologist Oviedo says, "This religious was a great cosmographer."† The historian Antonio de Herrera adds that "he was a great humanist,"—that is to say, a scholar and man of science. The historian Lopez de Gomora mentions also his learning, and his special knowledge of the sciences.‡ As to the excellence of his virtue, it was attested by the Sovereign Pontiff, Leo X.; and by the first bishop of the Antilles, Monseigneur Alessandro Geraldini, who speaks of "his pious life and of his well-known sanctity."§

* *Documentos Diplomaticos*, num. lxxi.

† Oviedo, *Historia nat. y gen. de las Indias*, lib. II, cap. 5; Herrera, *Hist. gener.*, decade I, liv. I, chap. vii.

‡ Lopez de Gomora, *Historia de las Indias*.

§ *Itinerarium ad regiones sub æquinotiali plaga constitutas*, *Alexandri Geraldini, Amerini, episcopi*, etc., lib. xiv.

After having shown the intellectual and ascetic superiority of this Franciscan, we may follow him in imagination to the roof where, in his quality as astronomer, he had a kind of observatory. He used his prerogatives as Superior only to extend the sphere of his meditations, and to prolong his studies.

Often during the sleep of his brethren, on calm nights, Father Juan, elevating his soul to the Creator of the Worlds, followed the harmonious course of the stars. Shining like a beacon-flame, his thoughts glowed solitarily from this steep declivity. During the day, when not employed in the offices of choir, he would reascend to the place of his intuitions, of which, perhaps, nobody then in Spain had the least suspicion. At the aspect of the waves going to lose themselves at an undiscernible distance in the west, he asked himself whether or not, beyond that space which no ship had ever traversed, the empire of the "Gloomy Ocean" was really unconquerable,—that formidable ocean, thus named because of the obscurity which enshrouded its nature, its limits, and its unfathomed depths.

This questioning already indicated a progress. The opinions of cosmographers were singularly confused in regard to the GLOOMY OCEAN. Some maintained that, continuing to sail in a straight line to the west for three years, one would not still reach a shore; others, that the ocean was illimitable and shoreless. Conformably to this divergence of opinion in regard to the form of the earth, every master in geography had his own peculiar system concerning the *Gloomy Ocean*. But Father Juan Perez, without letting himself be imposed on by Arabian geographers and renowned pilots, asked himself whether or not there were beyond these waters lands unknown to Christians. His solicitude for the salvation of peoples who did not know Christ, and his desire to see the holy name of Jesus blessed by all nations, led him continually to this question: Is there nothing beyond that expanse of ocean?

His presentiments always gave him an affirmative answer.

Independently of his theological knowledge, the Father Superior, by his frequent intercourse with the seamen of Palos, was well informed in regard to the expeditions of the Portuguese on the western coast of Africa, and knew of the discoveries that had been made at the Azores, and at Cape Verd.

One day, in passing by the porter's lodge, he noticed, in the parlor, Garcia Hernandez, the physician of the community, gazing with surprise on a traveller who came afoot, with a little boy, into this place so far away from the public route, and who asked the brother porter for a little bread and water for his little son. The Father Superior remarked the air of distinction of this man, contrasted with his state of destitution. Noticing by his language that he was a foreigner, he felt a curiosity mingled with interest, and asked him whence he came and whither he went. The stranger replied to him, very candidly, that he came from Italy, and that he was going to the Court of the Sovereigns, to communicate to them an important project. The Superior invited him into the cloister to take some rest, which the latter accepted.

This stranger was Christopher Columbus. How was he led to this monastery? Nobody could tell how.

Wherever he disembarked, whether at Port Santa Maria, at San Lucar de Barrameda, at La Higuerra, or even at Palos, his presence at the monastery of La Rabida cannot be explained on natural principles. This convent, then completely concealed by pine-trees, and visible only from the sea-coast, was out of the direct route which Columbus should have followed in going to Huelva. It was not in losing his way that he could have got there. He must have been led there by one of those chances, calculated admirably, which reveal to us the action of a superior power, before which we adoringly fall prostrate.

At this time Columbus was not going, as has been so often said, to Huetra, to see his brother-in-law, Pedro

Correa, the former governor of Porto Santo,* but to Huelva, to an obscure Spaniard named Muliar, who had married the youngest sister of his wife, † and to whom he would have undoubtedly confided his little son during his solicitations at the Court of Castile.

Assuredly, if the manner in which Columbus landed in Portugal was poetic or romantic, the way in which Providence assisted him on his landing in Spain is not less marvellous. When he arrives, without protection, without any recommendation, destitute of all support, in a country whose language he does not yet know, the divine goodness directs him to a man the best prepared for his ideas, and the most capable of comprehending and confirming him in his mission.

Under the coarse cloth that covered his breast, Juan Perez de Marchena concealed a generous patriotism. Neither age, nor the pursuit of science, nor austerities, had narrowed his heart. His expansive soul preserved its impressions full of freshness and vivacity, and it still felt that perennial youth of virtue which time cannot extinguish. He welcomed fraternally the stranger, towards whom he felt a sudden attraction. A kind of intimacy immediately took place between them; for already, before their meeting, there preëxisted between them the strictest conformity of ideas that can unite two intelligences.

The Father Superior, after the first disclosures of Columbus, invited him to remain with him, the present moment not being favorable to submit his project to the Court.

* All the biographers of Columbus have ignored the existence of Muliar, and, like Irving, have mistaken this obscure citizen of Huelva for his other brother-in-law, the Portuguese Pedro Correa, former governor of Porto Santo, an important personage.

† This is certain: "Iba derecho de esta villa de Huelva para fallar cin un su cuñado, casado cin humana de su mujer é que á la sazón estaba, é que había nombre Muliar." — *Pleyto, Probenzas hechas por el Fiscal del Rey. Pregunta 13; Supplem. primer a la Colección Diplom.*, num. lxxix.

It has been pretended that, distrusting his own judgment, Father Juan Perez sent immediately for Garcia Hernandez, physician of the community, residing at Palos, — a *savant* well versed in mathematics; that the project of Columbus was discussed among them in several conferences, and that, after it was recognized as rational, it was decided that it could be carried into effect. This is an error, as has been testified by Hernandez himself, in an authentic judiciary deposition.*

Between Columbus and his host nobody intervened. The confidence of Father Juan Perez was complete, because the demonstration was peremptory, — because the grand mission of that stranger was manifest to him, — because the Franciscan possessed that rare intellectual light that elucidates great questions, and which, without discussing them, decides on them. His knowledge of cosmography sufficed for him to appreciate the cosmic system of the man sent to him by Providence. He heard, he comprehended, he believed.

Thus, in this peaceable convent of the Franciscans, the largest scheme conceived by humanity was developed by genius and encouraged by enthusiasm. In this convent there was an implicit and sudden belief in the sphericity of the earth; of the existence of unknown islands and continents, and in the possibility of arriving at them, — at a time when, in all the academies, in all the colleges, in all the universities, these ideas were regarded as the dream of a sick brain.

Columbus, become the guest of the Franciscans, disengaged from the cares of material life, and having no longer to gain his daily bread, could give all his time to the affairs of his soul, and to the contemplation of divine things.

* Garcia Hernandez himself has fixed the date of the conference by the circumstance that at its conclusion the pilot Sebastian Rodriguez was sent to the camp of Santa Fe, which was done in the winter of 1491, six years after the time erroneously assigned by Irving and his copiers.

There he labored in the perfection of his interior. He sought by prayer, and other religious exercises, to become less worthy of being the instrument to accomplish the immense work with which he felt himself charged. Having free access to the library of the convent, he could study the Holy Scriptures, the ecclesiastical authors, the paraphrasts, and the commentators. It is known that he studied St. Jerome, St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, St. Isidore, and that he knew Scotus, Nicholas de Lyra, etc. Undoubtedly, it was there he acquired that varied knowledge of theological works which he showed afterwards. We have reason to say that the works of the Angel of the Schools, and of the Seraphic Doctor, the nobly speculative questions of metaphysics and of moral theology, did not prevent him from turning his attention to a study less high, but more practical, namely, the *Lives of the Saints*. He loved to reflect on the examples of those persons who had diversely served God;—these with an humble constancy and an obscure horizon; those with the splendor of genius and celebrity; and both equally precious in the eyes of God, and honored by the Church. Though he was a man of the world then, he still aspired, from the depths of his heart, to celebrate the glory of Jesus Christ. Deeply penetrated with the divine light with which the Holy Scriptures illuminate the understanding of the sincerely submissive believer, Columbus did not confine himself to what was to be learned in the library. He lived the monastic life, and joined in the studies and the meditations of the Father Superior, and in the offices and the spiritual entertainments of the community. He knew the spirit of St. Francis, and loved his Order, his rule, and his habit.

In his turn, in Christopher Columbus, Father Juan Perez loved the man, as he had already admired the cosmographer, the poet, the superior genius. We hesitate not to say he loved him so much the more that, being his confessor, it was given him to see naked that faith which remained pure and firm in spite of the audacity of learning, and of

the curiosity of the intellect. He could contemplate face to face that thought more vast than the known world, humbly inclined at the feet of the judge who has the power to bind and to loosen,—having, as a priest, read clearly in the depths of this soul, which, without being aware of it, unveiled its beauty in disclosing its faults in the tribunal of confession. He admired so much genius united to so much humility. He was astonished at the grandeur of this man so little known, in whom the highest qualities were associated in such harmony that they seemed to make but one by preëminence—that which we call Virtue. The Franciscan recognized in Columbus the mark of a providential election. It was, therefore, that he became interested in his destiny, and became attached to it with a devotion that only ended with his life.

At the time Columbus resolved to leave the monastery of La Rabida, Father Juan Perez procured for him a small sum of money, and gave him an earnest letter of recommendation to a man of influence at Court,—the Prior of Prado,—whose benevolent mediation, he said, would obtain for him an easy access and a favorable reception. As Father Juan Perez judged that, notwithstanding her noble origin, the sister-in-law of Columbus, the wife of poor Muliar, could not, at Huelva, give a suitable education to the young Diego, her nephew, he wished himself to take charge of his instruction. It was, therefore, under the roof, and with the bread, the clothing, and the books of the charitable Franciscan family, that the son of Columbus was fed, clothed, and educated in his early youth.

The guest of the convent of La Rabida, having his heart henceforth at ease, and his mind at rest, in regard to his child, took leave of the venerable Superior, and, accompanied by his prayers, took the route for Cordova.

CHAPTER V.

Sojourn of Columbus in Cordova. — He marries Beatrix Enriquez. — The support of the Clergy procures for him an audience with the Sovereigns. — His useless solicitations. — The conferences at Salamanca. — He serves at the siege of Baza. — The Superior of La Rabida again comes to aid him.

SECTION I.

COLUMBUS came, full of hope, to Cordova, furnished with the letter from which he expected a result as prompt as it would be efficacious. The great influence of the Prior of Prado, it seemed to him, ought to exempt him from ordinary delays, and gain him prompt access to their Highnesses.* But, alas! the reception he got from this personage soon dissipated the illusion. Not only did the Prior make him no promise, but he would' permit him to have no hope, and would not even deign to listen to him. Fernando de Talavera, who was to be his assiduous introducer to the sovereigns, became the first obstacle to the issue of his project. This man seemed to be chosen to exercise painfully his patience and his resignation.

Justly indignant at the impediments raised against genius in the accomplishment of its work, several writers have treated with severity the Prior of Prado, for the anxieties he caused to the most noble solicitor of the world. Impartiality obliges us to acknowledge that their generous indignation has carried them too far.

Brother Fernando de Talavera, of the congregation of

* At this period, in Spain, the sovereigns received only the title of *Highness*. That of *MAJESTY* was not used until the reign of Charles V.

the Hieronymites, Prior of Our Lady of Prado in Valladolid, and confessor to the two sovereigns, was not an ordinary character, envious of the glory of others, or systematically opposed to every new idea. Equally versed in letters and in theology, he, some years before, frankly seconded the literary movement inaugurated by Isabella. The wisdom of his counsels equalled his modesty. His assiduity in business matters, and his sagacious proceedings, augmented the revenue of the Crown with more than three million maravedis. In the midst of the splendors of the Court, he continued to lead the life of a true religious. Beneath an extreme gentleness, and a smiling piety, he concealed many austerities, as well as an ardent zeal for the glory of Catholicity. Free from all personal ambition, edifying in his actions as well as in his words, he possessed, without reserve, the confidence of the sovereigns, and enjoyed, even at Court, a reputation for virtue that bordered on sanctity.

What we know of him is not indicative of narrowness of views. But, however learned and pious the Prior was, he had no special knowledge of mathematics, and therefore could not have been a competent judge in a matter of cosmography. He judged from appearances, without being a physiognomist, and must necessarily have been deceived.

The aspect of this stranger, — obscure, poorly clothed, come nobody could tell how into Spain, arriving at Court without any support but the patronage of a monk of a rural monastery, — gave him no very advantageous idea of the man, or, consequently, of his project. He believed Father Juan Perez had been imposed on by this dreamer. Accordingly, he determined to let this *protégé* dance attendance at the vestibules, the reception-rooms and staircases, — to exercise his patience, and cause him to become disgusted with the trade of soliciting. He thought that in that he would render him a service. And when, through compassion, he consented to receive him, his air of incredulity, or of distraction, showing itself through the politeness

of his manners, would have discouraged the perseverance of Columbus, had it not been sustained by the invisible support that was given him.

We may now judge whether or not the Prior, who had made it a rule not to interfere in any recommendation, felt disposed to make any solicitation in behalf of this Italian. He would have considered himself culpable towards their Highnesses, in prevailing on them, in times so urgent, to spare some moments in listening to an adventurer, who, scarcely having himself a coat, came to offer them kingdoms. Columbus, then, had to suffer and to struggle against the prejudices of him who he expected would be his protector. During these disappointments and unsuccessful attempts, being at the end of his resources, and feeling keenly the restraints of poverty, he was obliged, in order to support himself, to recommence his copying of manuscripts, and his drawing of marine charts.

Lost in the midst of the crowd in that brilliant Cordova, famous for its elegant frivolities and the exigencies of its luxury, Columbus found himself forgotten, isolated, without friends, without familiar acquaintances, and given up to the saddest abandonment; when, notwithstanding his destitution, a noble maiden, in whose neighborhood he lodged, desired to console his misfortune in attaching herself to him by an indissoluble union.

She was of high descent. Her birth far surpassed her fortune, and her beauty her birth. She was named Beatrix. This name, so much loved by Dante, seemed to have been made for an Italian. Doña Beatrix Enriquez belonged to the noble house of Arana, one of the most ancient families of Cordova, in which virtue was transmitted by right of birth, and which, notwithstanding its little opulence, enjoyed that respectability which riches alone can never obtain.

The laconicism of historians, often their silence, and always the absence of Beatrix Enriquez on solemn occasions, some words of Columbus on his death-bed, veiled with a modest reticence, and grossly interpreted, have produced

a general prejudice against her. In fact, ancient historians, after having mentioned the fact of Columbus's marriage, have no more spoken of Beatrix. It was because they had nothing to say against her. Her modesty, the nature of her tastes, her habits, which made her shun the high scenes to which her title gave her access, her attachment for her native city, from which she was never absent, have prevented her being followed throughout the course of her life. Her history is limited to her marriage, as her happiness is to her union. The Christian wife enjoys modestly the glory of her husband, and does not make a show of it.

In what concerns Beatrix Enriquez the documents are brief, but convincing.

They show that she descended from the highest nobility, and was of rare beauty. Her fortune, unequal to her rank, still insured her an independent living. But, having brothers, it is probable that, according to the custom of the times and of the country, she received as a marriage portion only her "*légitime*." The marriage of Beatrix Enriquez took place in Cordova towards the end of November, 1486. She became the mother of Fernando Columbus the twenty-ninth of August following.

It may be said that this union was providentially prepared to fix Columbus in Spain, in order to attach him by family ties to that heroic land which had become his adopted country. If we consider attentively the circumstances under which this marriage took place, we shall find in it something strange, exceptional, like the destiny of Columbus; there will be found united in it—unexpectedness, grandeur, and moral suffering.

Notwithstanding her noble origin, her youth, and her rare beauty, Beatrix espoused a man then without name, and without his family being known; without youth, for he was forty-nine years old; without virginity of heart, as he was a widower having a son; and without fortune, for he possessed no lands or other property. Assuredly his dis-

tinguished air, the elevation of his conversations, savoring of a picturesque inaccuracy, showed his superiority; but his costume was unavoidably poor and plain: his hair wholly gray, and the wrinkles of his forehead no longer presented the charms of a long future, about which passion so often becomes voluntarily deluded. As an object of hope, he possessed only a project that was three times rejected by the councils of governments. Without doubt, the Aranas and the Enriquezes were opposed to this union, which shocked them in their legitimate pride, their interests, their prejudices, even their reason itself, and ought to appear less a surprise of the heart than an aberration of the mind. There could have been no want of dissuading Beatrix, of representing Columbus as an obscure foreigner, and as an audacious babbler or a dreamer. She had to sustain the opposition of her relations and friends, and to brave gossipings and ridicule,—that arm which always subdues feeble desires and overcomes common resolutions.

On the other hand, that a will so firm as that of Columbus should have yielded to the sway of the heart, the beauty of Doña Beatrix must have been irresistible, and her moral qualities must have formed with her person an *ensemble* wonderfully harmonious. But if he loved her on account of her charms, of a certainty he was smitten only with her devotedness, and loved her only because she loved him. Gratitude, that generous sentiment which becomes most deeply rooted in human affection, subdues the tenderness of that man whom nothing could have subjugated whilst he contained within his bosom the most vast thought of the whole earth.

It was not a marriage of convenience, of fortune, or of position; it was an inclination, pure and invincible, and stronger than ambition, or experience, or even misfortune. It was necessary that he should love with all the power of his soul, and feel a sovereign charm, in order that the necessity of quitting resolutely the presence of the object beloved, of living voluntarily in the remoteness of separation

to accomplish his work, should render his sacrifice more meritorious, and the immolation of his heart more sublime,—a sacrifice and immolation of which nobody has hitherto spoken, or kept account of in history.

The felicity which Beatrice offered him, placed as a temptation on the rugged route he was to travel, could not captivate that soul wholly inspired with its mission, or turn it from its immortal purpose. Columbus, while he was yet in Cordova, notwithstanding the charms of his marriage, did not the less continue with perseverance his useless efforts to be heard and be brought before the sovereigns. Not being able to succeed, he took his pen and addressed King Ferdinand directly in these terms:—

“Most Serene Prince,—

“I have been engaged in navigating from my youth. I have voyaged on the seas for nearly forty years. I have visited all the known quarters of the world, and have conversed with a great number of learned men: with ecclesiastics, with seculars, with Latins, with Greeks, with Moors, and with persons of all sorts of religions. I have acquired some knowledge of navigation, of astronomy, and of geometry. I am sufficiently expert in designing the chart of the earth to place the cities, the rivers, and the mountains where they are situated. I have applied myself to the study of works on cosmography, on history, and on philosophy. I feel myself at present strongly urged to undertake the discovery of the Indies; and I come to your Highness to supplicate you to favor my enterprise. I doubt not that those who hear it will turn it into ridicule; but if your Highness will give me the means of executing it, whatever the obstacles may be I hope to be able to make it succeed.”

In this style, straightforward, firm, and concise, in which facts take the place of words, we see stamped the character of the man.

This letter received no answer. As its author had fore-

seen, those perhaps to whom it was communicated mocked at the idea, and the King did as they did. Columbus waited, and did not become disheartened, but persisted in seeking to be heard in some other way. At length he succeeded in making the acquaintance of the former apostolic nuncio, Antonio Geraldini. This prelate, at the Queen's request, had just returned to Spain to finish the education of her oldest daughter.

The high intellectual ability of Antonio Geraldini predisposed him for grand conceptions. At the age of twenty-two his head was encircled with the golden laurel for poetry, amid the acclamations of almost the whole of Italy. According to Apostolo Zeno, he composed, among other remarkable pieces, twelve poems on the life of our Saviour. He was a man of a generous disposition. As soon as he became acquainted with Columbus, he experienced a lively attraction towards him, and became his friend, when he thought he was only his protector. He held discourse about his project with the principal personages of the Court, and especially the Grand Cardinal of Spain, Pedro Gonzalez de Medona, who was also Grand Chancellor of Castile.

At the request of the ex-nuncio, the Grand Cardinal received into his presence the Genoese navigator. More accustomed to affairs than the Prior of Prado, and measuring men by the first glance, as soon as he saw Columbus he recognized his marked superiority. After having heard him he felt a high esteem for him, and conceived so high an opinion of his personal character, that, without having thoroughly examined his plan, he considered it his duty to speak of him to the sovereigns. It was through this benevolent intervention that Columbus was finally enabled to obtain an audience.

Notwithstanding the poorness of his clothing, and his foreign accent, Columbus appeared before the sovereigns without hesitation or awkwardness. The dignity of his air and the grace of his deportment, with the noble familiarity of his language, won their attention. One would say

he was a disguised king conversing with his equals ; because, forgetting his poverty, and wholly penetrated with the sanctity of his object, he raised himself to the height of his mission, having a presentiment that he was the legate of Providence,* sent to the most powerful of Christian princes, and especially those most zealous for the faith : because he was engaged in proposing to those princes an enterprise that would immortalize their reigns, “ in doing service to our Lord by spreading His holy name and the faith among so many peoples,” who, perhaps, were still ignorant of the Messiah. To glorify the Redeemer, carry the Gospel and civilization to the most distant countries, and thus turn the temporal power to a good account, was to prepare the way for an imperishable crown in eternity.

It was plainly and solely on this religious motive that Columbus based his hopes in addressing himself to the Queen. The political and commercial advantages which he urged before the governments of Genoa, Venice and Portugal, were here presented only as secondary considerations. The first object of the Discovery, disengaged from every human consideration, was, therefore, the glorification of the Redeemer and the extension of His Church. Historians have hitherto left this circumstance unnoticed, or in a state of vague confusion.

Columbus, a man of desire like Daniel, wholly animated with the divine spirit, knowing the tender piety of the Queen, and receiving the favor of her attention as a pledge of her sympathy, spoke from his heart. His eloquence penetrated that of Isabella. From that moment she took an indefinable interest in that stranger. His intelligent look, his face beaming with genius, and his language full of natural elevation,—notwithstanding some defects in his prosody,—showed an uncommon superiority, and inspired confidence and esteem, mingled with respect.

The King, no doubt, experienced a little of this influence ;

* Columbus. — *Relation du troisième Voyage*, etc.



but his character, full of cold circumspection, opposed to every impulse of the heart, prevented him from coming to a decision. He desired that a project founded on scientific data should at first be verified by science; and referred the matter to a junta, or council, of *savans*, which he charged the Prior of Prado to convoke and preside over.

The commission given to the Prior was not as easy to fulfil as one would think. At that period, Castile counted but a small number of cosmographers, and it is acknowledged that these were not very able. For want of a sufficient number of cosmographers, the Prior summoned some theologians.

Salamanca, where the Court passed that winter, was naturally chosen as the place for the learned Congress. To assist the Prior of Prado in his functions, his cousin, Rodrigo Maldonado de Talavera, mayor (*regidor*) of Salamanca, was appointed secretary. The date of this memorable junta has not been preserved by history. Nevertheless, two circumstances enable us to determine it very nearly. The junta met in November, 1486. The official reports of the sittings, imperfectly made known in two years after, have not yet come forth from the archives of Simancas. In the absence of these, we may, at least, form an idea of the characters of those who shared in this curious debate between the intuition of genius and the incredulity of routine.

SECTION II.

Religion and science composed almost solely the city of Salamanca. Besides the King's College, and those of the orders of Calatrava, of Alcantara, of the Orphans, of St. John, of St. Pelagius, of the Mount of Olives, of the Cross, of St. Mary, of St. Bartholomus, etc., the Dominicans, the Franciscans, the Augustinians, the Benedictines, the Hieronymites, the Bernardines, the Fathers of Mercy, the Trinitarians, the Canons regular, the Carmelites, had each their school.



These several institutions comprised nearly all the degrees of education. Some were limited to Latin and humanities, whilst others taught the higher branches, such as the natural sciences, law, and theology. In the convents where these higher courses were carried on, some public halls exteriorly annexed to the cloister remained easily accessible to youth.

Education, then, in all its degrees was given on a large scale in Salamanca. These numerous educational establishments were conducted under the sole direction of a council called the University, over which a rector presided, who was elected on the feast of St. Martin. Nearly eight thousand students had their names entered on the register of the University.

From its real superiority and renown, the college of the higher studies, then directed by the Dominicans in their convent of St. Stephen, excelled all the other academical institutions. It was in the halls of this cloister that the scientific Junta assembled.

It was composed of the professors of astronomy and of cosmography, who held the first chairs of the University, and of the principal geographers and geometers, who had formerly studied mathematics under Master Apollonius, and natural philosophy under Master Pascual de Aranda, the only two eminent professors of science that Salamanca had yet produced. Neither Father Juan Perez de Marchena, nor the young pilot, Juan de la Cosa, attended the meeting. The Spaniard assuredly the best skilled in matters of cosmography, James Ferrer, the learned lapidary of Burgos, had not, unfortunately, been summoned there. He probably was then in Cairo, or in Damascus.

In this congress, the audience was not less imposing than the judges. It possessed as much knowledge as they did, and more independence. It will be remembered how unfavorable the president was to the project of Columbus. His cousin, Rodrigo Maldonado, partook of his prejudices. According to the manner in which things are usually man-

aged among commissions, it cannot be doubted that before the first sitting, the council, governed by the well-known opinion of the president, was prejudiced against the question to be decided, and against the person who came to defend it.

In the first place, all considered Columbus as a vain man, who pretended to be able to discover things that no cosmographer had ever dreamt of; whence it was inferred, that he considered himself superior to all his predecessors. Besides, he was a foreigner—an aggravating circumstance, and one which constituted not the least of his faults.

On the appointed day, Columbus appeared before these judges with great tranquillity of mind, notwithstanding the immense distance that lay between his ideas and theirs.

Many were predisposed to see, in the theory of this foreigner, a dangerous innovation; concealing, it may be, a heresy.

Before speaking, Columbus had resolved, in this controversy, not to go beyond certain generalities, and not to make known to the public the determinate cause of his convictions. The perfidy of Portugal kept awake his prudence, even before the loyal Court of Isabella. What he went to prove from cosmographic data before the congress, was not therefore the decisive reason of his system, and of its peremptory demonstration. He presented as principal reasons, only his secondary ones.

Notwithstanding this complication of embarrassments, Columbus exposed with confidence the fundamental reasons that appeared to him to be the base of his project. As he depended especially on scientific data and principles, the assembly could not well follow up his arguments. It was only the Dominicans of St. Stephen's that listened to him with attention and favor.

The discussion was too long, and touched on too many incidental questions to be promptly terminated. After each statement of Columbus, there was a secret reunion of the council, in order to consider the force of his arguments,

verify the authorities brought forward, and to prepare answers or objections for the next sitting. These conferences occupied some time, during which Columbus was the guest of the convent of St. Stephen. The Dominicans provided for all his wants, entertained him generously, and even defrayed his travelling expenses.* Even to this day, their community takes no small degree of honor to itself, for the hospitality so worthily extended to the messenger of Providence, then comparatively unknown.†

Columbus, feeling that in this Council, where the number of theologians was far greater than that of mariners and cosmographers, inductions purely scientific would not suffice for his judges, determined, notwithstanding the fear of being suspected of heresy, to discuss, at last, even the texts of Scripture and the opinions of commentators.

The ardor of his apostleship appeared then to transfigure him in the eyes of his audience. The majesty of his person, the illumination of his countenance, and the keen sonorousness of his voice, gave his language a persuasion that was irresistible to every unprejudiced mind. The poetry and the majesty of the Sacred Writings electrified his heart; the energy of his words became ennobled by the grandeur of the subject; and he turned against his adversaries, in magnificently developing to them those same texts of Scripture in which they thought they could show him his condemnation.

His noble attitude before the Council was not forgotten. Many among the assembly became convinced. Among these, the first professor of theology in the college of St. Stephen, the Dominican Diego de Deza, took his defence, and gained to his cause the first masters in the University.

* "Todo el tiempo que se detenia Colon en Salamanca, el convento de San Esteban le dava aposento y comida, y le hazia el gasto de sus Jornadas." Fray Antonio de Remesal, *Historia de la Provincia de San Vincinte de Chiapa y Guatemala*, lib. II., cap. vii.

† "Los Dominicanos ponen entre sus glorias el haber hospedado en San Esteban el Descubridor de las Indias." — Muñoz, *Historia del Nuevo Mundo*, tomo I., lib. II., cap. xxvi.

Columbus had, then, in his favor the respectability, if not the number, of the suffrages. But some fastidious intellects and opiniative scholastics considered it singularly presumptuous that a mariner should contest the opinions of St. Augustine and of Nicholas de Lyra. And there was circulated a vague rumor, which became dangerous in that country, where the Inquisition, lately established there, displayed the activity of its new jurisdiction. Happily the Nuncio, Monseigneur Scandiano, was not ignorant of what had passed. The former Nuncio of the Holy See was there. His young brother, Alessandro Geraldini, having a presentiment of the danger, obtained an immediate audience with the Grand Cardinal of Spain. A few words from him sufficed to show that the opinion of Nicholas de Lyra, great as he was as a commentator, and even of St. Augustine, so eminent for his philosophy as well as his sanctity, could not be of authority in matters of cosmography and of navigation,—sciences that were foreign to their labors. The opinion of the Apostolic Nuncio, of the Grand Cardinal, of the Ex-Nuncio, and of his brother Alessandro, and the lively sympathies of the professor of theology of St. Stephen's, Diego de Deza, supported by some notables of Salamanca, arrested the effects of the insinuations about which the Holy Office had already taken umbrage.

The Court did not await the end of these conferences. It left Salamanca the twenty-sixth of January, 1487, to go to Andalusia.

The Junta separated before spring, without having concluded anything. It condemned the project as being both chimerical and impracticable. Still, its proceedings were not drawn up and sent to the Court. The campaign into Malaga caused, for a time, the project of Columbus to be lost sight of. Fernando de Talavera could not occupy himself with it. In the first place, he took no interest in it, not believing the enterprise was practicable. On the other hand, obliged to follow the Court in his quality of confessor to the Queen, notwithstanding his recent promo-

tion to the bishopric of Avila, it would be difficult for him to follow up the affair, all the members of the Council having been dispersed.

Still, notwithstanding the sterility of the Junta, the conferences at Salamanca served to bring into notice the erudition, the science, and gigantic views of Columbus. His project had acquired an immense notoriety, and his name a kind of popularity. From that time, the Court began to treat him with consideration. Without concluding anything, without making any engagement with him, it was easy, during spare hours, to question him, and to converse about his plan. The King refused to risk a dollar, looking upon the matter of unknown lands at the extremity of the Indies as a mere golden dream.

It appears that at several times Columbus was called to Court. Payment for his expenses was allowed him each time. This is seen in the accounts of the royal treasurer, Francis Gonzalez, of Seville. We read there, at the date of May 5th, 1487: "Pay Christopher Columbus, a *foreigner*, three thousand maravedis, for things done in the service of their Highnesses."* The third of July following, an equal sum was paid him by the same treasurer. The military affairs that engaged the attention of the sovereigns caused the proposition of Columbus to be postponed, but not rejected; certain dates prove the fact. The surrender of Malaga took place the eighteenth of August, 1487, and nine days had scarcely elapsed when Columbus received from the royal treasury an order for "four thousand maravedis, to repair to Court, by order of their Highnesses."† The conferences about an expedition were reopened from time to time; but the immediate urgency of military affairs caused them always to be postponed to a future day. That year, Cordova becoming infested with the plague, the Court repaired to Saragossa, to spend the winter in that city. There again the affair of Columbus was brought forward for a little time, and he was summoned to attend; for a

* *Docum. Diplom.*, num. II.; Simancas.

† *Ibid.*

receipt of the fifteenth of October, 1487, shows that he received another order for four thousand maravedis.

Useless solicitations, and hopes deferred, occupied almost all the days of Columbus during the following year.

Still, it depended only on himself to execute at last his plan, and obtain the price he required for his discovery. King John II., the only Portuguese that could appreciate his genius, had cleverly resumed his negotiations with him. Columbus, in his answer, having, no doubt, mentioned as a reason for his refusal the fear that, once in the hands of the monarch, his counsellors would seek some pretext to make an attempt on his liberty, the King sent him a message, dated the twentieth of March, enclosing a safe-conduct. The address of the letter bore these words: "To Christopher Columbus, our particular friend, at Seville." But Columbus remained immovable in his refusal.

The sovereigns quitted Saragossa in the spring, to attempt a surprise on the territory of the Moors. In the course of the summer they called Columbus to Court, as is seen by an order for three thousand maravedis, paid him the sixteenth of June, 1488. They took up their winter quarters in Valladolid, which they quitted in February, to go to Medina del Campo, where they were to receive an embassy sent them by Henry VII., who desired to contract an alliance with them. In the commencement of May they went to Cordova. At this time, it appeared to them that the project of Columbus should receive a serious consideration. But another impediment came in the way.

The siege of Baza had been determined upon. It was necessary, without losing a day of the fine weather, to take that place,—one of the strongest positions held by the Moors. Again the project of Columbus was suspended. Unceasingly gaining new strength in his faith, the resignation of this valiant Christian was equal to the persistence of the almost fatal causes that so endlessly postponed his enterprise. It is not seen that in this trying situation he expressed any complaint, or betrayed the least impatience.

SECTION III.

The siege of Baza was not a simple combination of strategies; it embraced nearly the last effort of the Crusade. Upon its success depended the fate of the Moors in Spain. Columbus took up his sword, and repaired to the camp. There, in the subaltern ranks, he devoted himself silently, and served, with as much bravery as humility, the cause of the Cross. He appears even to have given excellent advice in regard to operations of the siege; but his want of fortune, and his being a foreigner and a mariner, prevented the Board from turning it to profit. Several checks experienced in the commencement of the campaign, the torrents of rain that fell, joined to the diseases that were multiplied by the scarcity of provisions, disgusted the principal soldiers. The King was solicited to raise the siege, for fear of a disaster. Before deciding to do so, he determined to consult the Queen, who was then at Jaen. Isabella dissuaded him from doing so, promising to furnish him with men, money, provisions and munitions: and she fulfilled her promise.

The surrender of Baza, in spreading dismay among the Mahometan Moors, filled Christian Spain with joy. Seville prepared a magnificent reception for the two sovereigns, who made a triumphal entry within its walls. Columbus saw fête succeeding fête, and rejoicing rejoicing, which postponed still further the renewal of the conferences he had waited for during two years.

Scarcely had the sovereigns recovered from the fatigue of these long-continued rejoicings, when a negotiation for the marriage of their daughter Isabella with the Infant Don Alonzo, — presumptive heir of the Crown of Portugal, — absorbed their attention.

New fêtes preceded the union of the prince and princess, which took place in April, 1491. New parades of splendor accompanied and followed the ceremony. The

succession of pleasures and of solemnities appeared interminable. Banquets, dances, marches, repelled the gravity required for scientific discussions. With what patience must not Columbus have been endowed!

It was impossible, before winter, to resume the discussion at Salamanca. The report which the Junta should have sent to their Highnesses was not yet prepared. Columbus, knowing that the Queen would not rest until Granada was under the domination of the Cross, was unwilling to await the preparations for a new war. Through the efforts of his friends, he obtained an order that the Council should reassemble, and give a definite judgment on his project.

The Bishop of Avila, Fernando de Talavera, presided over this reunion. His opinion had not changed. The members declared, unanimously, that the project was founded on a false and imaginary basis, its author affirming as truth what was impossible.

Notwithstanding these disheartening conclusions, the Queen did not abandon the project; her genius did not condemn that of Columbus. As the war she carried into Granada entailed enormous expenses, Fernando de Talavera was charged to tell him that the exhausted state of the treasury prevented the Queen from undertaking the enterprise then; but that at the end of the war the matter would be reconsidered.

After so many years of obsequious waiting, of persevering measures, of baffled hopes, that answer would have overwhelmed any other mind but that of Columbus. But, accustomed to privations, to railleries, and the disdain of proud ignorance, he bore with firmness this new disappointment. Determining absolutely that Spain, whose religious zeal and chivalric character interested his deepest sympathies, should profit by his discovery, he proposed the enterprise to one of the greatest lords of Castile, — the Duke of Medina-Sidonia, — who owned a fleet, ports, and even armies. Some years before, to raise the blockade of Alhama, which the Moors had pressed, he levied, among

his subjects, an army of forty thousand infantry and five thousand cavalry. The Medina-Sidonias held, royally, a state of sovereignty. Their power became augmented by their alliances with the most ancient houses of Spain. Consanguinity united their family, among others, with that of Her Excellency Eugénie de Montijo, Countess of Teba, who has become the Empress of the French.

An honorable reception, and an offer to be recommended to the Queen, was all that he could obtain from this great lord, who was then much occupied with his preparations for the coming campaign. The largeness of the views of Columbus made him consider the project as an illusion, and, it may be, a snare held out for his finances. He distrusted him, especially because he was a foreigner.

During these intervals, a gentleman named Morales, intendant of the Duke of Medina-Celi, who possessed a powerful fleet also, engaged his master to attempt the enterprise. Columbus was requested to come to Puerto Santa Maria, a city belonging to the Duke. A noble hospitality awaited him there. The Duke of Medina-Celi, struck with his grandeur of character, and taken with his conversation, felt so much confidence in him that he had ships proper for a voyage of discovery immediately constructed. But, when the moment for embarkation came, changing his mind, and fearing that such an enterprise, made in his name, would cause distrust in the Queen, he determined to solicit first her authorization. With this view, he wrote to her from Rota.*

The Queen thanked the Duke for this act of deference, and requested him to cede the shipping to the Crown, promising that he should be reimbursed for the expenses after the war. She told him that, though she did not much believe in the success of the project, she was still determined to make the trial. The Queen then requested the Duke to send Columbus to her. On the arrival of the latter, with great delicacy

* *Documentos Diplom.*, num. xiv.

of feeling, she confided him to the good care of Alonzo de Quintanilla, whose nobleness of spirit, grandeur of views, and Catholic zeal, merited so well the honor of such hospitality. At several times the Queen caused Columbus to be called, conversed with him about his plan, and assured him that after the war he should be satisfied. But when would the war end? All the Moors in Spain saw in Granada their last rampart. Their defence, prepared long in advance, promised to be most desperate. To put off the enterprise until the end of the war, would it not be to postpone it indefinitely?

Reviewing in his mind the delays, the refusals, the affronts he had borne in silence; seeing that his life was wearing away painfully, and in vain, as regarded the accomplishment of his work; and fearing that Spain, blind and deaf to her own interests, and ungrateful for the constancy of his devotedness, was disinherited by Providence of the grandeurs destined for her, — Columbus ceased from soliciting longer. He turned away from the Court where his patience was so often tried, and determined to go immediately to France, in order to treat with her king, to whom he had recently addressed his proposition.

Already at his departure from Lisbon, foreseeing the case where Spain may reject his offers, to economize time Columbus had sent his brother Bartholomew to propose, in his name, the enterprise to the King of England. Since then he had not heard from him. But he had resolved not to push the negotiation which he believed was already commenced in London, until after France would have formally rejected his proposal.

Before leaving Spain, perhaps forever, he concluded to take to his wife in Cordova his son Diego, who remained at the monastery of La Rabida, in the charge of the worthy Juan Perez de Marchena, who charitably attended to his education.

He went then to the convent of La Rabida.

SECTION IV.

An inexpressible sadness seized the heart of the Father Superior when he saw at the door of the monastery his old guest and friend, bearing on his countenance the traces of fatigues and of disappointed hopes, endured for nearly six years. When he learned that this great man, weary of contending with the disdain of *savants* and the temporizations of the Court, had determined to quit Spain and gift another nation with his ideas, his patriotism became as much moved as his friendship. He trembled for his country; he feared to see her irrecoverably deprived of the glory and of the prosperity that such an enterprise would acquire for her. He begged Columbus to delay his departure, and to spend some time with him.

Juan Perez begged a friend, a disciple of St. Francis, and he could not be refused. Besides, the peace of the cloister was welcome to Columbus; he needed recollection of spirit, and repose in God, from the fatigues of the world. He needed to have his hopes renewed, to become more thoroughly confirmed in his exceptional vocation, and to draw from this mysterious source new force against the disdain and the conflicts that, maybe, awaited him elsewhere.

Until then the father superior had accepted, through spontaneous sympathy and a preëxisting conviction, the project of Columbus. He judged of it intuitively, and believed it without the influence of anybody else. Still, in remembering that at two congresses, the Junta of cosmographers had rejected the idea of his guest, his moderation made him think that perhaps he was deceived, that he had mistaken his desires for reasons, and his reasons for the truth itself; and that science, divested of illusions and of enthusiasm, may falsify his dearest hopes. In order to remove these doubts, he determined to have other opinion besides his own in regard to the views of Columbus. Accordingly, he sent immediately to Palos, for the physician

Garcia Hernandez, a mathematician well versed in cosmography. All the three conferred on the projected plan, the object of so many debates. The opinion of Hernandez was entirely conformable to that of the learned Franciscan. The project was deemed founded on truth, and its execution practicable.*

Thenceforward, with the Superior of La Rabida, it was no longer time for praying or for discussing—it was time for acting. He determined to write, forthwith, to the Queen. But, to guard against his letter sharing the fate that too commonly befell letters delivered to the secretaries, it was decided that it should be put into the Queen's own hands by some trusty person. The influence of Father Juan on the seamen of the shore enabled him, in concert with Garcia Hernandez, to choose a messenger who, as occasion may require, would dexterously serve as a defender. They confided the letter to a man of some note—the pilot Sebastian Rodriguez—who, by his address and acquaintance with etiquette, knew how to manage things at Court.

The pilot obtained the favor of handing the letter of the Superior of La Rabida to the Queen. The Franciscan, in that letter, showed his zeal for the glory of the Redeemer, his patriotism, and his attachment to Queen Isabella.

At the end of two weeks the pilot reappeared at La Rabida, the bearer of a royal message. Isabella, thanking her former confessor for his intentions, invited him, on receipt of her letter, to come to her presence; and authorized him from that moment to raise the hopes of Columbus while waiting for further instructions. These words of hope filled with joy the little community and their guest.

Columbus went immediately to Moguer, to request an

* It is wrongfully that modern historians, and, among others, Washington Irving, have mentioned that the mariner Martin Alonso Pinzon was called to the convent for the discussion. It is seen, by unquestionable documents, that Martin Alonso Pinzon was then in Rome. Columbus had no connection with him until the commencement of July, 1492.—

excellent man there, Juan Rodriguez Cabezuda, to lend him his mule for the Father Superior of La Rabida, who was called suddenly to the camp of Granada by her Highness. Cabezuda willingly granted his request. Father Juan Perez left the convent a little before midnight, secretly and without a lantern, notwithstanding the danger of falling into an ambuscade, or among marauders. He travelled bravely through the enemy's territory, trusting in God, and, speeding his way, arrived safely in the new city of Santa Fé.

To give attention to the proposition at a time when the war was so pressing, and return to a scheme that was condemned by two councils, the Queen must have been strongly inclined in favor of the enterprise. In the midst of her financial embarrassments, and the uncertainty of the length of the campaign, to be still occupied with the project was an unmistakable sign of the adhesion her heart instinctively gave it.

Nobody better than the Superior of La Rabida could make known to the intelligent Isabella the sublimity of the views of Columbus. It was not alone of his project that he would speak; he alone could reveal the predestination and the holy intentions of the man whom Providence sent her in recompense for the life she led, and to eternize her glory.

The Franciscan obtained complete success.

The Queen, without further thinking of the Junta of Salamanca, remembering the praises given to Columbus by the two Geraldinis, the Grand Cardinal, Professor Diego de Deza, and others, and confiding especially in her first impressions, charged the father superior to summon Columbus without delay. As she conjectured that in the midst of such long-continued and fruitless solicitations his money must have been spent, and desiring that he should dress more to her taste, buy himself a riding-horse, and appear respectable at Court, she ordered him to be paid twenty thousand maravedis* by the maritime broker at Palos.

*Equal to two hundred and sixteen dollars of the present day. — B.

CHAPTER VI.

The War in Granada: Surrender of the City. — The Project of Columbus Discussed. — Deception. — Columbus starts for France: the Queen recalls him, and orders Preparations to be made for his Voyage. — The Equipment. — The Father Superior again assists him. — Departure of Columbus with three Ships.

SECTION I.

WHEN Columbus entered the new city of Santa Fé, it was impossible to attend to his project. The Queen gave him as a guest to the Intendant-General of the Finances, the virtuous Alonzo de Quintanilla, who was quite happy to have him again.

The struggle between the Cross and the Crescent was drawing to a close. There was talk of an early capitulation; of seditions and of combats in the interior of the city. In fact, a negotiation was soon opened for the surrender of Granada.

On Friday, the thirtieth of December, the surrender of the fortresses and of the Alhambra was made by the Moorish government to the commissaries of Ferdinand and Isabella. The second of January, 1492, the Moorish King, Boabdil el Chico, presented the keys of the city to the Catholic Sovereigns.

This war being, in the eyes of the Queen, only an expedition for the cause of religion, the sovereigns did not immediately enter Granada. They determined, first, to do homage to Jesus Christ for the conquest.

On Friday, the sixth of January, the Epiphany, or the Feast of the Kings, the two sovereigns made their solemn entry into the Alhambra, at the gate of which the Arch-

bishop of Granada, assisted by a numerous clergy, received them in procession.

After a struggle of seven hundred and seventy-eight years the Crescent was, at last, laid prostrate. This victory of the Spaniards gave joy to the whole Christian world. John de Strada was immediately sent to Rome as envoy-extraordinary. He made such haste that he was himself the first to announce the news of the conquest. The Sovereign Pontiff, Innocent VIII., thanking God with his whole heart, ordered public thanksgivings, and a solemn procession to the church of St. James, of the Spaniards. His Holiness assisted there, with the whole of the Sacred College. The Pope officiated pontifically; and, in the sermon pronounced in his presence, the preacher praised highly the Christian character of the sovereigns and the people of Spain.

'At this epoch, in the midst of the favors it reserved for Spain, Providence cast a look of complaisance on "Genoa the Superb." While one of her sons, from the ranks of the people, meditated the most stupendous work of human genius, another, chosen from her illustrious patricians, occupied the throne of Apostolical infallibility.

John Baptist Cibo, a citizen of Genoa, promoted to the tiara under the name of Innocent VIII., was truly the prince of peace, the mediator in the quarrels of kings, and the zealous promoter of the war against Islamism. Nobody took a more lively interest in the success of Isabella, and in the hopes of his countryman, Christopher Columbus, than he did.

The triumphal rejoicings of the conquest were not yet at an end, when the Queen gave an audience to Columbus.

The aspect alone of the noble foreigner, to whom she felt attracted by a secret communion of faith and of genius, sustained her against the objections of the Junta of Salamanca. At this audience there was no discussion of the project, because there existed no doubt of its realization. The Queen, in giving her adhesion to it, instinctively felt that there was in the man an intelligence that would over-

come the difficulties. His sole presence showed his internal grandeur. She believed in Columbus.

The project being accepted, then, without control, without restriction, and such as inspiration had conceived it, there remained nothing but to determine the remuneration that should result to its author after the success. A commission, still presided over by the over-cautious Fernando de Talavera, was charged with regulating this point. Columbus had to attend it, and make known his claims. This was to be done categorically.

Then did that man, with a thought more vast than the world, show the grandeur of his hopes by the price he set on their realization. In hearing him, the commissioners must have been stricken with stupor. The following are the principal conditions he required from the Crowns of Castile and Arragon. He should be,—

Viceroy ;

Governor-General of the islands and *terra firma* he would discover ;

Grand Admiral of the Atlantic Ocean.

His dignities should descend hereditarily in his family, by right of primogeniture.

He should be entitled to reserve for himself one-tenth of all the precious stones, pearls, diamonds, gold, silver, perfumes, spices, fruits, and other productions, in whatsoever manner discovered in, or exported from, the regions submitted to his authority.

In hearing such demands, the commissioners became indignant at his presumption. The pride of these courtiers became incensed at the idea that an Italian, who so often had been ridiculed, or pitied, whilst he waited in ante-chambers to solicit audiences, should now stipulate for titles that would place him above the noblest houses of Spain. The conference was suspended.

Still, what Columbus demanded appeared in his own eyes very simple. He considered it very natural, as he was going to give the monarchs kingdoms much larger

than those they held, to fix a remuneration the importance of which would show it to be for an unheard-of donation. The recompense ought to be proportionate to the service; and he who accepts less than his due concurs in his own humiliation. Besides, Columbus demanded only the price he had, nine years before, required from the Crown of Portugal. If he added nothing, he retrenched nothing. What he thought then, he thought now. The same causes existed still. It was necessary, in order to realize his views, to have a high position, great authority, and especially great riches. It was identically the same here as it was in Portugal.

Is it desired to know immediately the secret of this high ambition? It was this: a secret that escaped from him some days after, in a familiar conversation with the sovereigns, and which, he says, "made them smile."*

Columbus considered as already accomplished his discovery of unknown countries, to which he would have the happiness of announcing Christ the Redeemer. He foresaw that his enterprise would encounter numberless dangers and terrible obstacles, and that it would require incessant labors. In return for these labors, he demanded a magnificent recompense, — the only one that he deemed worthy of his works. He had resolved, by means of the treasures he would acquire by his discoveries, to deliver the Holy Sepulchre from the sway of the Mussulmans. He determined that he would at first treat about purchasing it peaceably, and, if he should not succeed, that he would raise fifty thousand infantry and five thousand cavalry, in his own pay, to wrest from the profanations of the Mahometans the tomb of Jesus Christ. He would immediately transfer the government of Jerusalem to the Holy See, limiting himself to be the sentinel of the Church at the threshold of that miraculous land in which our redemption was accomplished.

* *Columbus's Journal*, Wednesday, the twenty-sixth of December, 1492.

The commissioners of the Court, not being able to divine the secret intentions of this man, saw in his demands only an insolent presumption, as daring as his adventures on the ocean. Probably they did not discuss even his vanity, and that they limited themselves to referring the matter to the monarchs.

Fernando Talavera, still imbued with his prejudices against the Genoese cosmographer, represented to the Queen that there would be a great inconvenience in their Highnesses' being parties to a treaty on the subject of an expedition that had been adjudged chimerical; that failure would expose them to the mockeries of foreign courts, and diminish in their own states the respect that was had for their well-known wisdom; that, even admitting its success, to accord such exorbitant privileges to an unknown person, and especially a foreigner, would inevitably lessen the majesty of the royal prestige. These observations of her confessor made the Queen hesitate. She proposed to Columbus conditions somewhat different, but still highly advantageous. No doubt, the same as in Portugal, he was offered revenues, titles, and a government that would satisfy any heart but his. But he would accept of none of these offers, and would abate none of his demands. What he said, he said; and he held to his demand royally, as a king would to his word. In all his converse with crowned heads, when, too often, his clothing betrayed his indigence, he naturally, by his elevated language,—the sign of a familiar dignity,—treated monarchs as equals; and, now that the hour for the execution of his mission had arrived, he acted as he had spoken.

He retired, inflexible in his demand.

Neither his poverty, nor his six years passed at the Court of Spain in fruitless proceedings, nor the course of time, which threatened his project with death, could move him. More than eighteen years had been consumed in diverse attempts, and still he preferred recommencing anew his

difficult negotiations with another state, rather than derogate from what he considered the dignity of his rights.

His friends tried to detain him. It appears that, at this critical time, he was anew in relation with the Grand Cardinal of Spain. In his high opinion of Columbus, this prince of the Church did not consider as immoderate the conditions demanded for such services, and against which the pride of the courtiers had revolted. But considerations of a particular character, and foreign to the subject, prevented him from interfering personally; and he could give only the patronage of his opinion.

Outside of the Commission, the exorbitancy of the demands of Columbus engaged the attention of the counselors of the sovereigns. As it was sneeringly objected to him that he showed rare shrewdness, because he had obtained such a position that, come what would, he would always have the honor of a command without any cost, he offered to contribute one-eighth of the expense. Notwithstanding this generous offer, what he demanded was still refused. The King had shown himself already averse to the project. The influence the archbishop of Granada exercised on the Queen had paralyzed her will. It seemed to her that really the *quasi*-royalty demanded by Columbus would be too onerous, whatever may be the discoveries he should make.

The conference was at an end, the negotiation abandoned. Obtaining nothing, and ceding nothing, inflexible in his resolution of diminishing nothing in his demands, Columbus cast his eyes towards France, whose King had just sent him an answer. It was at the end of January, and he was unwilling to spend another day in useless parleyings with the Spaniards. He bid adieu to his excellent friends, and, crossing his mule, went on the route to Cordova, to visit his family, before abandoning Spain, perhaps forever.

SECTION II.

Around Isabella, that star of the destinies of Spain, there gravitated some choice spirits, who reflected the splendors of her inspirations. Desiring ardently the glory of God, and the grandeur of their sovereign and of the Spanish nation, the departure of Columbus appeared to them an immense, irreparable loss, which probably would prepare an eternal regret and shame for their country. One of these men, Luiz de Santangel, receiver of ecclesiastical dues in Arragon, urgently requested an audience of the Queen. Alarmed for the glory of his idolized sovereign, and moved by his zeal, he told her, in a tone of reproach mingled with complaint, his surprise that she had flagged on an occasion so simple, — she whose courage was always seen to be invincible. He represented to her how much that enterprise merited her protection, since it may have such grand results for the glory of Jesus Christ, the triumph of the Church, and the prosperity of her kingdoms. He begged her to think of the displeasure she would experience if some other monarch should execute the project, which was possible, and even probable. He reminded her that even the person of Columbus, his purity of morals, his faith, his science, and his superiority over the cosmographers who condemned him, merited confidence so much the more that he demanded nothing before giving himself: his recompense would depend on his discoveries; and, besides, he risked his own life, and the eighth part of the expenses. Admitting that he would discover nothing, no blame for the failure could be attached to their Highnesses; everybody, on the contrary, would thank them for attempting an enterprise the success of which would be so glorious. He insisted on the moral obligation of princes to extend the domain of the sciences, to become acquainted with distant things, and to penetrate, as much as possible, into the secrets of the world.

Far from becoming offended at the freedom of these remonstrances of Santangel, Isabella, who appreciated their motives, thanked him for his frankness. At this moment came Alonzo de Quintanilla, whose consummate virtue always commanded marked respect. He supported with energy the disinterested representations of Santangel. During this time, at some paces distant, in the chapel of the Queen, Father Juan Perez, prostrate before the tabernacle, besought the Lord, through the merits of the passion of His Divine Son, to enlighten, with His grace, the mind of Isabella. Undoubtedly, God graciously heard him.

Suddenly the appearance of the Queen changed; her looks became illumined. A mysterious movement was operating in her soul. God opened her understanding. Her eyes sparkled; she comprehended Columbus wholly; she saw what a man Providence had sent her. Then, listening to nothing but what the interior voice spoke to her heart, she thanked these two faithful servants for the interest they manifested in her glory, and, in the accent of an unchangeable resolution, declared that she accepted the enterprise on her own account, as Queen of Castile. She added, that it still would be necessary to defer the enterprise for a little time, on account of the exhausted state of the treasury, in consequence of the war; but, if this delay would be unsatisfactory, she had there her jewels, and that they should be pledged for the sum necessary for the equipment.

Luiz de Santangel assured the Queen that she would not have to pledge her jewels, and that he would himself advance the necessary sum out of the funds of Arragon. He obtained an authorization from the King for the required loan; and at a later period it was reimbursed to the treasury of Arragon. The too cautious King would take no part, personally, in the enterprise, having no confidence in its success.

Immediately, by order of the Queen, an officer of the Guards was despatched, in all haste, after Columbus, to

summon him back. He succeeded in overtaking him about two leagues from Granada, near the bridge of Pinos, celebrated for many an encounter between the Christians and infidels. It is said that, disgusted with so many deceptions and equivocations, he hesitated a little time about turning back; but when informed of what had passed, he obeyed with an affectionate submission, divining already the part reserved by Providence for that lady in his work, who alone was worthy of being associated with him.

SECTION III.

On his arrival at Court, Columbus was received with extraordinary honors. The Queen welcomed him with such marks of satisfaction and kindness, as must have caused his immediate forgetfulness of all his past sufferings. It is from this moment that the mission of Columbus commences; henceforward the Queen alone becomes the soul and the medium of the enterprise. The crafty and suspicious King of Arragon remains a stranger to the expedition. He gives his name and signature to the acts of the Queen, according to the conventions agreed between them; but it was well understood between them that the enterprise was solely undertaken by the Queen of Castile, at her own risk. So, during his lifetime, the Castilians alone had the right of establishing themselves in the countries that were discovered.

What Columbus demanded was granted, without retrenching a tittle.

On the thirtieth of April, 1492, the title of the privileges of Columbus was drawn up. The letters-patent declared that he would be Grand Admiral of the Ocean, with the same privileges enjoyed by the Admiral of Castile; Viceroy and Governor-General of all the islands and the *terra firma* that he should discover; and that his dignities should be hereditary in his family forever.

The eighth of May, to these contingent recompenses the

Queen added a favor of exquisite kindness, in naming young Diego, the oldest son of Columbus, page to the Prince Royal, with an annual pension of nine thousand four hundred maravedis. This envied honor was reserved for the most illustrious houses of the kingdom.

For the equipment of the expedition, from motives of economy, the humble port of Palos was chosen. As its inhabitants were condemned, for some misdemeanor, to furnish the Crown, gratuitously, for one year, with two caravels, armed and equipped, they were enjoined to get them ready, and place them under the orders of Columbus within ten days. An order was issued to suspend all criminal processes against any person who should engage in the expedition.

The twelfth of May, Columbus, having obtained leave to depart, started immediately for Cordova, to make some arrangements relative to the education of his children. It was probably then that a nephew of his wife's, Diego de Arana, determined to attempt with him the frightful voyage across the "Gloomy Ocean."

A few days afterwards Columbus arrived at Palos.

SECTION IV.

Father Juan Perez de Marchena, who had opened an asylum for the poor and unknown stranger, received into his arms the friend, loaded with honors and filled with hopes, returning to share with him the first joys of the happiness the better part of which he owed him. Columbus became again the guest of the community of St. Francis; and, as will be seen, the assistance of the Father Superior was not then less useful to him than it was in the days of his first arrival at La Rabida.

Meanwhile, when it became known in Palos that the intention was to navigate westwards to the "Gloomy Ocean,"—the "tenebrous sea,"—a general consternation spread from house to house and from bark to bark. The

GLOOMY OCEAN! That name froze with fright the most intrepid hearts.

At the present time, from the heights of our scientific knowledge, we would assuredly show bad taste in smiling affectedly at these terrors. They were, at that period, natural, and almost logical, inasmuch as they were founded on reasonings. Let it be remembered that the telescope had not yet penetrated into ether, to gauge space, to number the myriads of suns in the milky way, to take the projections of the peaks of the moon, or to calculate the velocity of the planets that revolve around our sun. Science had not fixed the composition and the volume of the earth; its form had remained indeterminate. Some maintained that it was flat and long,—continued indefinitely by the incommensurable ocean; others, that it was square, but surrounded by the boundless ocean. It was stoutly denied that there were antipodes. In consequence of the imperfect state of nautical science, the teachings of cosmographers were as whimsical and contradictory as chaos. It is not surprising that this confusion should act on intelligences. In the mind, the unknown touched on darkness,—and darkness is fearful to every human heart. It was thought that chaos,—Erebus,—had receded into the extreme depths of that ocean which cosmographers called *gloomy*; because, according to the Nubian geographer,—the sheriffe Edrysi,—and the Arabian navigators, there were met with, on entering it, “strong currents, obscure waters, and but little light in the atmosphere.” The uncertainty and the obscurity of science in regard to that ocean, seemed to justify the name given it. It was in the GLOOMY OCEAN that the pelagian torrents were encountered, and where the gulfs whirled; in the bosom of which Behemoth and the great Leviathan wanted, accompanied by other monsters.

All the works on geography gave countenance to the ill repute in which the Gloomy Ocean was held; for on the charts of cosmographers were seen, around the frightful

words MARE TENEBROSUM, hideous figures, compared to which cyclops, griffins, and hippocentaurs had benignant physiognomies.* The Arabian geographers, forbidden by the Koran to represent living animals, restricted themselves to characterizing that ocean by a sign, the ominous signification of which, without frightening at first sight, no less confounded the imagination. It was a black and crooked hand, — that of Satan! — arising from the deep, and ready to drag into the gulfs the seamen that would be daring enough to brave the waters of the BAHR EL TALMET.

These submarine dangers were not the only ones the explorers would be subject to. Gigantic opponents may immediately pounce on them from the air. In these latitudes there hovered, on immense wings, the rock of the Arabians, which, with its bill, seized not only a man or a bark, but even a ship with all its equipage; taking them up in the clouds, and from that height amusing itself in tearing and breaking them to pieces, and letting them fall, men and things, into the hideous waves of the GLOOMY OCEAN. Certain grave authors bear witness that, at that period, they themselves participated in the common error.

These impressions and this terror are easily explained, if we call to mind that there did not then exist a single atlas that did not indicate, by images of monsters more and more frightful, the nearer degrees of latitude to the equinoctial line. How could the people, the sailors, have escaped from the common error? To go into the GLOOMY OCEAN was

* Washington Irving says: "In the maps and charts of those times, and even in those of a much later date, the variety of formidable and hideous monsters depicted in all remote parts of the ocean, evince the terrors and dangers with which the imagination clothed it. The same may be said of distant and unknown lands; the remote parts of Asia and Africa have monsters depicted in them which it would be difficult to trace to any originals in natural history." — *Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, Book V., chap. v. — B.

to expose one's self to the danger of being burnt by the sun ; of being engulfed in the obscurity of chaos ; of being destroyed in the air, or buried eternally in the abyss of the dark ocean. And the intrepid pilots who had frequented Lisbon, or sailed to the Canaries or to the Azores, while they greatly diminished these fears, were not the less convinced of the impossibility of ever traversing the *Gloomy Ocean*, — the frightful *BAHR AL TALMET* of the Arabians.

But time sped on. Notwithstanding the royal order, and their promise of compliance with it, the authorities of Palos had not yet furnished a single caravel. The anchoring-place was completely deserted. All the owners of sailing-vessels took them to distant creeks, or sailed them to other ports, to escape the requisition.

The twentieth of June, the Queen, being informed of the state of things there, sent an officer of the Royal Guards, Juan de Peñasola, to Palos, with power to exact two hundred maravedis a day from such as should delay or refuse to execute his orders. He was authorized to seize, on the coast of Andalusia, any ship or sailor that would appear to him proper for the new service.

There was great consternation among the ship-owners and the seamen. Some complained and some contested ; to supplications were added promises. But the equipment did not go on the faster. At length, Juan de Peñasola, by main force, seized on a caravel, a good sailer, called the *Pinta*, that partly belonged to two inhabitants of Palos, Gomez Rascon and Cristoval Quintero. These men considered themselves as ruined, they and their vessel, — their whole fortune. They cursed the coming of the Genoese intriguing braggart, who had imposed on the prudence of the sovereigns, in obtaining from them the order for this disastrous voyage.

The calkers and carpenters felt sick, or concealed themselves. There were neither wood, nor oakum, nor tar, nor cables. The rigor of the authority given to Peñasola succeeded no better than the reasonings of Columbus. Three

vessels were necessary, and still there was but a single one. Sullenness had already begun to show itself.

In this critical situation, the zeal of Father Juan Perez came to the aid of his friend, and of the misguided people.

The Franciscan, from the poorness of his living, and the coarseness of his garb, is naturally sympathetic with the people. He is loved, because he evidently loves. His modest familiarity attracts, while his devotedness attaches him. The Superior of La Rabida, moreover, enjoyed a personal consideration among seamen. He mixed with the sailors, jesting at their terrors, and tranquillizing the minds of their families, and went making the enrolment, by his words and his influence, even to the neighboring ports. The zealous Franciscan expected from this expedition the extension of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, a great glory for the Church, and great advantage to civilization.* He felt, as had so justly been said by the Queen, that Columbus "went into the oceanic regions to accomplish great things for the service of God." As a Catholic, he took an active part in the good work, and prided himself in coöperating in the apostolate of his guest; thus endeavoring to realize the wish of the founder of the Seraphic Order, whose zeal sought to preach Jesus Christ, His Cross, and His holy poverty, throughout the whole universe. Thus Father Juan labored, with heart and soul, to change poltroons into men of courage, and to decide the irresolute.

SECTION V.

There were then residing in Palos three brothers of the name of Pinzon, — men of wealth and of influence, and all three experienced seamen. Father Juan Perez had already made Columbus acquainted with the oldest of them, Martin Alonzo. He was a man of some science, of practical tact, and of experience in maritime matters.

* *Noticias Historiales de las Conquistas de Terra Firma*, not 3, cap. xiv.

The idea of a voyage across the "Gloomy Ocean" did not terrify Martin. He had recently returned from Rome, whither his business had already called him several times. In his last voyage there, he had acquired some ideas that naturally prepared him for the grand views of Columbus.

Martin Alonzo Pinzon had become intimately acquainted with one of the librarians of Pope Innocent VIII., who was said to be well versed in geography. This *savant* showed him an atlas in which there was indicated a nameless land in the ocean, towards the west. Thus, while the Superior of La Rabida had a presentiment that unknown lands existed, the cosmographer of the papal library had come to the same conclusion. Besides, the idea of Columbus could not have been wholly unknown in Rome. We know that at the time of his correspondence with Toscanelli, the latter frequented the Papal Court. It was from the capital of the Christian world that the learned Florentine wrote his second letter to the Genoese navigator.

The project of Columbus, which would produce such grand results for the Church, could not be indifferent to the successor of the prince of the Apostles. During several years the Holy See was informed of the ideas of Columbus. The project interested the Holy Father so much the more, because it was one of his own countrymen that became inspired with it. It must have engaged the attention of Rome at different times; whether through the ex-legate, Antonio Geraldini, or the Spanish ambassador, Strada; whether through the correspondence of Count De Fendilla, former envoy of Castile, or especially through the Apostolic Nuncio, Barthelemy Scandiano, the ulterior relations of Columbus with the Holy See show that he must have communicated his resolution to the chief of the Church, and invoked his blessing on the object of his labors. A constant tradition in Rome proves the matter. Rome in our days recalls the fact.* The relatives of Pope Innocent VIII.

*Brief of his Holiness, the tenth of December, 1851.

knew the interest the illustrious Pontiff took in Columbus's project; it was for this reason that they had inscribed on his tomb his participation in the Discovery, which he did not have the joy here below of seeing effected.

We cannot see how any doubt can arise in regard to the map bearing an indication of a land undiscovered. Such an indication may exist in consequence of that mysterious initiative attending great things, which is peculiar to the Catholic Church, or as a consequence and testimony of the preceding communication of Columbus's ideas, submitted by himself to the Sovereign Pontiff.

Young Arias Perez Pinzon, who accompanied his father in that voyage, was present at the cosmographic conversations with the librarian. He saw that *savant* give his father a copy of the map, which the latter preserved carefully; perhaps with the intention of one day attempting the discovery. The cousins and friends of Pinzon, and, among others, the pilots Juan de Ungria, Luis del Valle and Martin Nuñez, knew of this document on his return.*

However that may be, as soon as Martin Alonso Pinzon, returned from Rome, and Christopher Columbus, who was known there, came to meet each other, all the difficulties disappeared.†

* Pleyto *Probanzas del Fiscal*, Pregunta xi., xii.

† The Protestant school is greatly embarrassed at this influence of Rome being so decisive in the expedition. Not knowing how to object to the facts just referred to, Washington Irving has passed over them in silence. But Humboldt could not recede from their logic. In his entire ignorance of Catholic piety and dignity, without respect for his own good name, and with an inconsiderateness which literary justice cannot too much blame, he dares to suppose a trick agreed on between the older Pinzon and Columbus, and, consequently, with the Superior of Rabida, in the latter's imposing on the credulity of the people, and inventing the fable of the map brought from Rome, in order, thus, to win public confidence. Silence and sadness are the only reply that such a miserable explanation merits.

Besides the moral impossibility of such an agreement with men

The news of the geographical communication made by the librarian of the Pope went to sanction the approbation given by the Apostolic Nuncio, the Grand Cardinal of Spain, the first professor of theology at Salamanca, and the Franciscan, Juan Perez de Marchena, to the ideas of Columbus. Evidently, the patronage of the clergy seemed to guarantee the assurances of the Genoese stranger. Distrust in him became, therefore, less general.

Soon the news spread that the oldest of the three Pinzons, commonly called "Old Martin," believed in the project of the Genoese. It was added, even, that he proposed to make the adventure, himself, in the *Niña*, a pretty little caravel belonging to Vincent Yañez Pinzon, the youngest of the three brothers. In fact, the three Pinzons had signed a convention made with Columbus. Their example increased wonderfully the influence of the Superior of La Rabida, and most of the seamen began to take courage.

The Pinzons stood in high credit at Palos. Old Martin did business in riggings and munitions for ships; he was the principal purveyor for the marine of that port. His fortune, his education, and the ancience of his family, placed him at the head of the notables of the city. For the demand made on it, Palos now offered as a second caravel, a certain carack, grown old from service, named the *Gallega*; large, comparatively, and heavy, but very solid. Although improper for the service now assigned her, neither Columbus nor his counsellor, Father Juan Perez, dared to refuse her, for fear of thus protracting the delays, already too greatly extended. The carack was then received in place

of the character of Juan Perez and Christopher Columbus, it is well to remember, that, long after the death of the three pretended accomplices, the inquiry of the Fiscal *versus* the successor of the Admiral of the Indies, showed, and still shows, the proofs of that voyage to Rome, and of the information there received by Martin Alonzo Pinzon. The commissioners of the inquiry collected the depositions of witnesses *de visu*.—

of a caravel, and her equipage was commenced. Columbus even chose her for erecting in her his pavilion, as commandant, only he first changed her name, to render it Christian. Placing her under the special protection of the Blessed Virgin, he had her blessed, and named the *Santa Maria*.

During the preparations for the equipment, he continued to live the life of a member of the Seraphic Order. He did not leave the convent but when necessity required it, occupying himself with the care of his soul, and advancing in Christian perfection. It was undoubtedly then that he engaged himself to the rule of St. Francis, as a member of the Third Order. His days were passed in prayer, and in meditating on the mysteries of religion. He labored to become less and less unworthy of the goodness of God, who had deigned to choose him for a work unequalled among men. He became in nowise troubled about the delays, the terrors, or the ill-will of the city, although at his departure the opposition became so serious that it was only the royal authority that could overcome it.

Knowing that his being a foreigner, — a Genoese, — would render his eloquence of no avail; that he would not be believed, and that it was necessary to accept whatever the limited resources of Palos would place within his reach, he accepted with complete self-renunciation what Providence had decided. It was among his principles not to tempt God, not to force circumstances, but to bear them with resignation, still using unremittingly everything possible in human action. He felt assured of success, was not discouraged at any difficulties, was no longer engrossed with exterior things, and remained in that dear cloister where he had met an incomparable friend, — the most intimate and the most loving one on earth.

Henceforward, certain that his mission would be accomplished, he did not abandon his interior labors and regard to exterior matters, but limited himself to taking a look, from time to time, at the details of the equipment, which the Pinzons watched with the greater assiduity, because

they were interested in the success of the expedition; the three brothers, and particularly the youngest, having, through the intervention of Father Juan Perez, advanced Columbus the eighth part of the total expenses which he was to furnish.

On one occasion Columbus detected an expedient, conceived by Gomez Rascon and Cristobal Quintero, to escape from the expedition which still terrified them. They had so managed the rudder of the *Pinta*, that the pieces of which it was composed appeared perfectly jointed and pinned, but would yield or separate at the first surge of the sea. He desired to make them recommence the work; but the carpenters fled, and the calkers concealed themselves.

It was then that the indefatigable Franciscan Father rendered new services to the world, in bringing the mechanics back to their work, and in cheering them with wholesome exhortations. Thanks to him rather than to the Pinzons, or to Juan de Peñsola, who still remained to hasten the expedition, towards the end of July, the three ships of which the expedition was composed were ready to take the sea.

SECTION VI.

M. De Lorgues gives at length the details of the preparatory measures for the voyage. "It seems to us," he says, "interesting to restore scrupulously to history, after a gap of three hundred and sixty-five years, some precise details of the material preparations for that voyage." But the scope of this work will not permit their being mentioned here. Let it suffice to say, that the expedition was not composed of "light barks," as asserted by Irving and others, but of *caravels*, — vessels of considerable size and tonnage. Columbus himself said he found them very befitting for such an enterprise.

Columbus, who left nothing to chance, would assuredly

not have been guilty of the temerity of risking "light barks." To believe him guilty of such imprudence would be to know but little of the man whom Providence raised for such a work.

The expedition was composed, then, of three caravels, each having provision for a year, and a good armament. They were respectively named the *Santa Maria*, the *Pinta*, and the *Niña*.

On the *Santa Maria* there embarked, according to their order of precedence, the following: The Honorable Diego de Arana, nephew by marriage of Columbus; Pedro Gutierrez, the King's yeoman of the stores; Rodrigo Sanchez de Segovie, named by the sovereigns *Veedor*, controller of the armament; Rodrigo de Escovedo, notary royal, charged with registering the acts and the proceedings according to their occurrence; and Bernardin de Tapia, the historiographer of the expedition.

After these, as mates, there were the pilots Pedro Alonzo Niño, a true seaman; Barthelemy Roldan, a speculating character,—more of a merchant than a soldier; Fernand Perez Matheos, an envious and unquiet character; Sancho Ruiz, zealous for the service; Ruy Fernandez, a good officer; and Juan de la Cosa. Then followed the interpreter of the expedition, a converted Jew,—Luiz de Torrez, who knew Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, Coptic, and Armenian; then the official metallurgist, Castillo, a goldsmith from Seville.

The board of health was composed of a certain Doctor Alonzo, a middling physician; and of a very good surgeon, Doctor Juan, who was an amiable man, and very compassionate towards the sick.

Among the crew, there were an Englishman named Tallerte de Lajes, an Irishman named William Rice (Guilemio Ires), two Portuguese, and a Majorcan, which, with others, formed a total of sixty-six persons. It is to be remarked, that among the men on board the *Santa Maria* there were none from Palos.

The fine-sailing *Pinta* was commanded by the oldest Pinzon. He had, as mates, his brother Francis Martin Pinzon, his cousin Juan de Ungria, and Cristobal Garcia Xalmiento; as physician, Garcia Hernandez, of Palos; and as clerk, another Garcia Hernandez, whom historians have often confounded with the former. With the exception of Juan Rodriguez Bermijo, all the sailors were from Palos or from Moguer, — places which, from their proximity, were often confounded with each other. The officers and crew of the *Pinta* amounted to thirty men, besides several passengers.

The trim and coquettish *Niña*, commanded by Vincent Yanez Pinzon, with a crew of only twenty-four men, carried the rest of the friends and neighbors of the Pinzons.

It cannot be doubted that, in finishing his review of the equipage, Columbus, as was his custom, made an address, and that, yielding to the emotions of his heart, he spoke to them of God, into whose hands they were going to commit their souls. Whatever may have been the resolution of these men, when the time for departure came they were seized with great fear. The imminence of the danger in such an expedition turned their hearts to the Father of Mercies. Each thought of reconciling himself with God, of confessing his sins, and obtaining absolution for them. Afterwards they went, in procession, to the monastery of La Rabida, their commandant at their head, to implore the divine assistance, and to put themselves under the special protection of the Blessed Virgin. They attended mass, received the Holy Eucharist from the hands of Father Juan Perez, and returned, in a religious procession, to the caravels.

It was a touching ceremony. The whole of the city of Palos participated in the emotions of the seamen, and many a tear was shed in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin.

In order to be able to avail himself of the first east wind that would arise, Columbus ordered that no officer should sleep on land. Then, having embraced his young son

Diego, whom the generous Juan Perez had returned to him, he consigned him to the special care of the good priest Martin Sanchez, and Rodriguez Cabezada, to take him to his wife, Doña Beatrix, in Cordova, in order to have his education completed. He then returned to his cell at La Rabida.

There he spent his time in consulting with God, in listening to Him, and in purifying his heart, that he may merit becoming a temple of the Holy Ghost. His knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures enlarged his intelligence. He felt himself destined to a mission greater, perhaps, than any mortal being had ever received. He went to fulfil an unheard-of apostolate,—to carry the Cross across the *Gloomy Ocean*, into unknown regions, and to put the posterity of Shem in communication with their anciently-lost brethren of the race of Japhet.

Buried in that peaceable monastery, where he received so many unexpected consolations, his pure and ardent faith expanded itself before God; his profound wisdom and accumulated science presented no obstacle to the tender effusions of his piety, and the ardor of his devotion. Meditating on the Gospel of St. John, his favorite book, he raised himself, like the eagle of Patmos, to sublime conceptions of the Word by whom all things are made. With loving devotion, he spent in prayer and meditation all the time not claimed by the offices of choir; for he scrupulously observed the rule of St. Francis.

We have reason to believe that he then made a final spiritual retreat, while awaiting the moment for departure.

SECTION VII.

About three o'clock in the morning of the third of August, Columbus awakened to the rustling of the pines, whose tops were agitated by the land breeze. The practised ear of the mariner soon recognized the expected favorable wind.

That day was a Friday. Friday, which, among sailors,

is superstitiously considered as a day foreboding evil, became, on the contrary, for that fervent Christian, a day of fortunate presage ; — for it was the day of our redemption ; that of the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre, by the Frenchman Godfrey de Bouillon ; and that of the rendition of Granada, the palladium of Mahometanism in the west. Hence it appeared to Columbus a day providentially destined for his departure.

It cannot be doubted that, quitting immediately his cell, he rapped at the door of the Father Superior, and that soon the latter awoke the brother sacristan to light the wax candles, preparatory to the celebration of mass. A few moments after, the watch-guards on board the caravels may, through the pine-trees, see the high window-panes of La Rabida shine at that unusual hour. Whilst the community were enjoying their peaceful slumbers, Columbus entered, with gentle steps, into the chapel of Our Lady. The Father Superior, clothed with his sacerdotal vestments, ascended to the altar to offer the Holy Sacrifice, for an intention, until then, perhaps, unheard of since the institution of the Eucharist. At the time of communion, Columbus approached the holy table, and received, by way of *viaticum*, the bread of angels.* After his acts of thanksgiving, he left the convent noiselessly, always accompanied by Father Juan Perez de Marchena.

During these emotions, recollection becomes a need, and silence a sweetness. Talk can only disturb that interior calm which it is itself incapable of giving. It is probable they descended, absorbed in thought and in silence, the declivity leading to Palos. The last stars still glittered in the firmament, and the first glimmerings of dawn began to appear in the orient. They arrived together at the town of Palos.

As soon as they came, the cutter of the *Santa Maria* approached the shore to receive the commandant.

* Oviedo y Valdez, *Historia*, etc., lib. II., cap. v., fol. 6.

The voices of the pilots and boatswains awakened the inmates of the neighboring houses. The windows and doors immediately flew open. The cry, "They go, they go!" soon resounded everywhere. Mothers, wives, children, run to the quay, sobbing and weeping; relations and friends throw themselves into barks, to approach the caravels, to bid their adieus to those they, perhaps, will never see again. Columbus, pressing to his heart the Franciscan father, moved to tears, bids him a silent farewell, and jumps into the cutter, which soon reached the *Santa Maria*.

The Commandant, received on board with the honors prescribed by the Admiralty of Castile, ascended the poop, and took a glance at the arrangements. The sign was given for those in the cutters to leave, the shore-boats were hoisted aboard, and the anchors drawn up to the prows.

The *Santa Maria* bore the royal flag of the flotilla. A faithful emblem of the sentiments of Christopher Columbus, and of the real object of his voyage, this flag was truly the standard of the Cross. It bore the image of Our Saviour nailed to the tree of the cross, while from the main-masts of the *Pinta* and the *Niña* there waved only the banner of the expedition, marked with a green cross between the initials of the sovereigns, and surmounted with a crown.

Then Columbus, saluting serenely the crowd on the shore, and, with hand, bidding a last adieu to his friend Juan Perez, took his place on the quarter-deck; and, fully impressed with the character of his enterprise, with a loud voice commanded the sails to be unfurled, in the name of Jesus Christ.*

* Oviedo y Valdez, *La Historia nat. y. gen. de las Indias*, lib. II., cap. v., fol. 6.

CHAPTER VII.

Events of the Voyage. — Fears of the Sailors. — New Aspects of the Ocean. — Variation of the Mariner's Compass. — A Conspiracy and a Revolt. — Firmness of Columbus. — His Prediction of the Discovery.

SECTION I.

M DE LORGUES here complains that the incidents of this voyage have not hitherto been completely given to the public, and that historians have held too exclusively to the meagre account of it given by the celebrated Las Casas, from the Journal of Columbus. To supply this omission, De Lorgues enters into lengthy details of the events of the voyage, relying on the authority of several writers, and of documents, of the highest respectability. But the limits prescribed for this work will not permit our following him throughout.

Remote as we are from that memorable day, how can we avoid still admiring that calm and eminent courage, that firm will which has to face the invisible, conquer the unknown and the formidable, overcome the prejudices of pilots and the terrors of sailors, vanquish the most terrible uncertainties and the phantoms of the imagination, not less frightful than the dangers of the sea, brave the science of the times, and affront unknown enemies, — sea-monsters, every possible creature in the air and in the waters, eddies, currents, water-spouts, calms, famine, death from thirst, etc. . . .

SECTION II.

On Friday, the third of August, 1492, after commanding the sails to be unfurled, Columbus entered his cabin, and, taking his pen, commenced, also, his Journal of the Voyage in the name of Jesus Christ: "IN NOMINE DOMINI NOSTRI JESU CHRISTI," etc.

This prologue, which we possess entire, shows, from the first, the specially Christian character of the enterprise. The desire of penetrating into space, and the zeal to evangelize the people supposed to exist in unknown regions, show, by their union of aim, that this expedition was, prior to all other considerations, a great act of Catholic faith. We have a glimpse of the holy union there was between the thought of Isabella and the hope of the pious navigator. Columbus, at first, declares that it is, after having terminated the war against the Moors, and erected the Cross on the towers of the Alhambra, that the two sovereigns, in their zeal for the propagation of the faith, sent him to the countries of India, to see the princes and the peoples of those countries, in order that they may be converted to our holy faith. He terminates this introduction to his Journal by saying that he will write every night the events of the day, and every day the events of the preceding night; that he will inscribe on a chart the waters and the lands of the great ocean; and that he will banish sleep from his eyes, in order to direct the navigation, and to accomplish those things that require great efforts.*

On Monday, the sixth of August, the breeze increased sensibly; and soon the *Pinta* made a signal of distress, her rudder having become unhung, and gone to pieces. Columbus, not being able to remedy the accident, on account of the swell caused by the high wind, still ap-

* See this prologue, *in extenso*, in Irving's *Columbus*, vol. I., p. 125.—B.

proached her. He then discovered the machinations of the owners, Gomez Rascon and Cristobal Quintero, who had already tried the same means to prevent the expedition, hoping to be able to escape it themselves. The captain, Martin Alonzo Pinzon, had the pieces bound fast together by strong cordage, and the voyage was continued. They directed their course to the Canaries. The pilots of the three caravels differed about the line to be taken to approach them soonest. Columbus gave his opinion in opposition to those of the pilots, and the event proved the justness of his reasons.

They arrived there at night. The Commandant ordered the captain of the *Pinta* to remain at the Great Canary, while he would go himself to try and replace her with another vessel. Having uselessly sought one for more than three weeks, he had a new rudder made for the *Pinta*, and had the lateen sails of the *Niña* changed into square ones. After having taken in water, wood, and fresh provisions, they were on the point of starting, on the sixth of September. At that moment a vessel arrived from the Isle of Ferro, informing the Commandant that three Portuguese caravels had been hovering off that island to capture him. The wrath of John II., excited by the refusal of Columbus, pursued the latter to the ocean; and, to add to his uneasiness, a dead calm fixed him in the waters of the Gomera, in sight of the Peak of Teneriffe, the volcanic eruptions of which terrified the seamen.

This situation, so tantalizing, lasted from Thursday morning until Saturday before dawn. At length, profiting by a light wind, he advanced, and beheld the last of the Canaries,—the island of Ferro,—precisely that at which the Portuguese caravels awaited him. “He was, therefore,” says Washington Irving, “in the very neighborhood of danger. Fortunately, a breeze sprang up with the sun, their sails were once more filled, and, in the course of the day, the heights of Ferro gradually faded from the horizon.” From the beginning of this wonderful voyage we perceive,

by the very words of a Protestant writer, the aid given by Providence to its minister Columbus. That was not the only one. God did not cease from assisting him. If the ordinary laws of nature were never suspended in his favor, still the most happy coincidences came always to his aid with such a miraculous appropriateness, that they needed no miracles.

SECTION III.

Here ended the nautical science of the most able mariners; they were now going to enter into unknown regions. Whilst the heart of Columbus bounded with a noble joy in launching into a route which no man had ever traversed, the seamen, after having seen the heights of the Isle of Ferro disappear, began to lament. They became desolate, despairing of ever again seeing their country. The Admiral tried to remove their fears, and spoke to them of the bold undertakings of gross and sordid minds. He succeeded in cheering them up for a little time. Still, from a motive of prudence, counting from that day, he wrote the reckonings in two distinct log-books: making in one, fictitious reckonings for the crews; and in the other, the true ones for himself. He feared his officers would become discouraged, if the voyage appeared too long. And he was not mistaken.

The thirteenth of September, the genius of Columbus endured a rude shock. His attentive eye noticed the first index of magnetic variation. It was the first time, since the commencement of history, that the like observation was made.

Columbus remarked, at nightfall, that the magnetic needle, in place of pointing to the north star, became directed to the north-west; and that the next day, at day-break, the variation was still greater. Thus his only guide, — the mariner's compass, — whose infallibility alone inspired the officers with a little hope, began to betray

him, and he found himself destitute of all hope from the sciences. The Commandant took good care not to communicate this piece of information to the officers, whose brows were already clouded.

On Friday a happy omen, for vulgar intelligences, reanimated the hopes of the sailors. The crew of the *Niña* saw a sea-swallow, and a ring-tail,—the first birds they saw since they left Gomera. The next evening a meteor, in the form of a fiery branch, appeared to fall from the heavens, at a distance of about four leagues. The crews were frightened at it; but the contemplator of God's creation only gazed at it with admiration.

The seventeenth of September, they reached those latitudes where tropical influences are so delightfully felt. "There was a real pleasure experienced," says Las Casas, "in enjoying the beauties of the mornings, and there was nothing wanting to it but the warbling of nightingales. The weather was like the month of April in Andalusia."

SECTION IV.

Towards that part of the globe which borders on the oceanic prairies, a mysterious cosmographic division seems to take place in the skies, as well as in the deep waters. A strange feeling of the unknown and the unexperienced, acts on a person; he has imposing views before him; and he feels the distant power of the equatorial regions, and his proximity to southern skies.

The now magnificent aspects of the ocean,—its limpidity, its solitude,—strike the beholder with an amazement that is surpassed only by that which is produced by the nocturnal phenomena that are presented.

Since the beginning of the world, these wonders were displayed only before the eyes of celestial spirits; for the inhabitants of this world, they were as if they had no existence. At length, the beauties and solemn grandeurs of the equinoctial ocean, until then unknown, displayed

themselves to the eyes of men. For the first time since the creation did the human intelligence exercise its faculties in these latitudes, until then the domain of petrels, gulls, porpoises, and gigantic fishes. And he who was chosen by Providence to be the guide of immortal souls on the deep, was here the highest personification of intuition, and of love of the Creator. Neither before nor after that day did a holier curiosity, nor a livelier comprehension of nature, find its place in these moving latitudes.

The sacred image of the Redeemer, on the flag of the expedition, which was unfurled by the breeze, seemed, in conjuring the brute forces of the air, to sanctify the elements in traversing the gleaming horizons; and, in the night, the phosphorescent waves. Every evening, hymns in honor of Mary, the Ocean Star, were wafted by the winds of the Atlantic. Under the auspices of the WORD, Columbus took, in the name of the faith, possession of immensity. The Most High had accorded him the honor of being the first to penetrate into space on which neither the eye nor the look of mortal had ever yet lit.

In entering into these regions of the GLOOMY OCEAN, the cause of so much terror, then enshrouded in a mystery which he was destined to penetrate, Columbus, incited by a laudable curiosity, and desiring, as he himself said, "to know the secrets of the world," darted his untiring looks into the depths of the transparent waters. He tried to ascertain the character of the submarine vegetation, of the forests decking the depths of those concave regions which the sounding-line could not reach. What kind of beings inhabited those sombre residences? What drama was now being acted in the deep Atlantic recesses in the bowels of the ocean? And what terrible eventualities may there not arise from those gulfs, now seemingly dormant?—a fearful question, and one before which any other mortal would have quailed!

Both history and poetry have vaunted the fearless *sang froid* of Columbus, his boldness, his passion for celebrity,

and his contempt for death ; and writers have thought they did him honor in calling him “ the hero of glory.”

Such views of him are all errors.

He who advanced calm and serene above the abysses of the deep, had not, and did not think he had, any merit for intrepidity. In no circumstance does he make any allusion to his courage. He knew very well whom to attribute to the “ fortitude and magnanimity ” he displayed in the conducting of his enterprise. Yearning, above all things, to glorify the Divine Word, to proclaim the blessed name of the Redeemer in the countries he should discover, feeling that his labors were connected with the spread of Christianity and the future relations of peoples to each other ; understanding that he was made by Divine mercy the legate of Providence, and a deputy of the Apostolate to unknown nations, he drew from above the secrets of his power. Protestantism cannot deny it. “ Columbus considered himself under the immediate eye and guardianship of Heaven in this solemn enterprise.” *

Having instinctive consciousness of the sublimity of his mission, and knowing that this voyage would tend to the honor and glory of the Christian religion, he feared no danger, and held as nothing his fatigues, as he wrote, at a later period, to the supreme chief of the Church, the vicar of Jesus Christ.† Still, notwithstanding his confidence in God, far from reposing altogether on the divine bounty, and lulling in a sweet quietude, he was watchful day and night. As he was answerable to God and to Queen Isabella for the lives committed to his charge, he did not depend on others for the care of them. Except the hours he retired to recite the office of the Franciscans, as was his custom at La Rabida, he passed his days and nights at the poop, watching

* Washington Irving, — *Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*. Bk. III., chap. iii.

† *Carta del Almirante a su Santidad*. — Docum. Diplom. num. cxlv.

the helm, observing the sea, the air, the stars; mounting, sometimes, the top-mast, in order to see farther, and the better to judge of the regions traversed by the vessels.

Naturally of a retiring disposition, and averse to the requirements of etiquette, he gave himself to the contemplation of the works of the Creator, which, with him, from his youth up, was his greatest delight, as in his advancing age it was the sweetest consolation of his soul. Better than anybody else in the world, he knew how to comprehend the indications of the great phenomena and the mute notifications of nature. He found himself in that latitude, unknown before his time, where the influences of the air and of the waters, wholly new, disconcerted the theory and the instruments of nautical science. It is that part of the globe where the color, the bitterness, the saltiness, and the density of the waters change, and where the constancy of the temperature only equals its mildness. Columbus remarked "an extraordinary change in the heavenly bodies, in the temperature of the air, and in the state of the sea." Examining unceasingly the new face of this new nature he had met with, his genius tried to draw from the exterior phenomena some revelation in regard to the regions he had reached. His eyes spanned the horizon, his organs of smell interrogated the least effluvias of the saline scents that were borne by the winds. Frequently he tasted water drawn at different depths, to ascertain its temperature. His sounding-line was ever gauging the depth of the waters. He made experiments on the direction and the force of the pelagian currents, and seized with eagerness the herbs and plants passing by; for everything could be an index to a man of his penetration. A little lobster was caught in sea-weed; Columbus examined it attentively, because such a shell-fish was never seen at eighty leagues from a coast. The seawater was sensibly less salt than it was at the Canaries. Some tunnies showed themselves, and the crew of the *Niña* succeeded in harpooning one.

The eighteenth of September the air was like that of

spring in Seville. The regular breeze pushed on finely the vessels, which endeavored to outsail each other, in order to perceive land, and gain the annual pension of ten thousand maravedis promised by the Queen to the one who would first point it out. Martin Alonzo Pinzon, whose vessel was the fleetest sailer, took the advance, because he had seen a flight of birds take a northern direction. He assured the Commandant that in steering to the north he would find land in fifteen leagues. Still, notwithstanding the urgent entreaties of his men, Columbus would not consent to turn aside from the route. This firmness appeared to be proud obstinacy to the men, who were already disquieted about the length of the voyage. Their fears embraced with rapture the hope of a neighboring land announced to them by an experienced captain, and, moreover, their own countryman. This refusal caused a sullen discontent in the crews of the three vessels.

SECTION V.

The nineteenth of September, there arose mists without any wind, which was for Columbus a certain sign of the nearness of land. He was convinced there were islands near, but he would not go out of his way to search for them, his object being to arrive straight at the Indies. He wrote in his Journal, "The weather is good, and, please God, all will be well."

On Friday, at daybreak, some favorable signs appeared towards the west. A booby passed near the ships, and a whale came to sport at the surface of the water. The seaweeds and tropical sea-grapes showed themselves in such abundance, that the water appeared curdled. Such was their resistance, that the cut-waters could hardly cut through them. They had arrived at that part called, since that time, "the herby sea," whose extent occupies a superficies equal to seven times that of France.

The aspect of this verdure, which at first pleased the sight and raised the hopes of the sailors, for it appeared to

indicate the nearness of land, now, by its immensity, became a serious alarm. They believed they had got to those endless swamps of the ocean which were said to serve as boundaries to the world, and as tombs for the curiosity of those who affronted them. These crowds of plants, assembled in such infinite numbers, presented the aspect of an unbounded marsh, which the Creator had placed as a limit in the ocean, in order to interdict access to it from the temerity of mortals. This immense and conglomerate vegetation, which from the depths of the waters appeared to arise as a warning from Heaven, made the most fearless turn pale. It seemed as if these indescribable latitudes had been marked as the last limit of navigation, and that this salt herbage, becoming more and more dense and matted, the caravels once completely in its bonds, their return would be impossible. And should it happen that they would not become the prey of sea-monsters, hidden under that verdure, they had at least the assurance that during the conflict of their prows with the herbage, their sea-stores would become exhausted little by little, and that famine, with all its horrors, would be the expiation of so cursed an audacity. The minds of the sailors became involuntarily haunted with frightful visions, the natural consequence of the stories mariners were in the habit of telling during the long watchings of winter, — sometimes about the uninhabited regions of the south, and sometimes about the submarine giant of the north, the Kraken, that terrible polypus which with one arm embraced the White Sea, while with another he grasped the German Ocean. They did not forget the dainty syrens, the sea-monks and anonymous monsters, large and small, that dragged ships into whirlpools. Among the officers, the most courageous minds, without adding anything to the real dangers, feared the keels would give way against the reefs concealed by this vegetation, and run aground in the midst of those marine prairies, where it would be impossible for them to save themselves by their boats, for never could their oars get free from the long and knotted vegetation.

There was another cause of unceasing anxiety that disquieted the three crews. The more they advanced, the more the wind, with a very gentle breeze, seemed to push to the west. Now, never, in seas that were known, was there an example of such a fixity of impulsion. They imagined that this constancy of direction, so favorable for taking them to the unknown regions of the west, would be an insurmountable obstacle to their return, and that they would forever remain separated from their country.

The twenty-second of September, they held their course west-north-west, and made about thirty leagues. The herbage, far from becoming denser as they advanced, became, on the contrary, thinner, and almost disappeared. Some petrels and other birds were seen. Meanwhile, the crews became only more downcast and irritable. They got over one fear only to fall into another. The constancy of the winds from one quarter put the climax to their terrors. It was in vain that the Commandant gave them assurances and cosmographic explanations. They would not listen to him; already they had ceased to believe in him, and they thought nothing of either his threats or his promises. Respect for his authority, or submission to the august names of the sovereigns, were gone. There remained to him no longer any human means to make himself obeyed, and to continue the enterprise. Columbus had, then, no other resource but to Him who had always assisted him. In this conjuncture of affairs, an opposite wind arose suddenly, as if to show the unreasonableness of their apprehensions.

In declaring the opportuneness of this wind sent him by God, Columbus wrote, quite simply, these words in his Journal: "This contrary wind was of great advantage to me, because my crews were in a state of great excitement, imagining that in these seas no winds blew that would bring them back to Spain." *

* *Columbus's Journal*, Saturday, twenty-second of September.

But the restored tranquillity could not be of long duration. The next day, they were again seized with their vain terrors. It was Sunday. The sea-weeds and plants of different kinds reappeared in thick beds, covering the whole extent that was visible. The breeze pushed gently to the west, without causing the waters to undulate. The prolonged calm of the waves became in its turn suspected. There were increasing murmurings among the sailors. They said they had attained those stagnant latitudes where the winds lose their impulsive force, and the sea its equilibrium; for they had left the sphere destined for the abode of men. They recalled to mind those animals that attach themselves to the keels of ships, and retain them until they become the prey of the monsters inhabiting those submarine forests. Already had Columbus exhausted all his reasonings; he had no human means of reassuring those imaginations scared by their own phantoms, when, in the midst of his perplexities, and without the wind being felt, the sea immediately surged or swelled so that "all were astonished at it." Columbus, thanking his Master,—the good God,—wrote in his Journal these words: "So the swollen sea was of great advantage to me, which never occurred before, save in the time of the Jews, when the Egyptians went from Egypt in pursuit of Moses, who delivered the Hebrews from bondage." *

The twenty-fifth of September, the *Pinta* was so near the *Santa Maria* that the Commandant could converse with Martin Alonzo Pinzon in regard to a chart he had sent, three days before, to the latter. Columbus demanded it back; and Pinzon, tying it on the end of a cord, flung it on board to him. On this chart were delineated some supposed islands, and Martin Alonzo thought they must be in the neighborhood of them. Columbus told him, that without doubt, drawn by the currents to the north-east, the caravels had not made as much way as the pilots thought. This conversation, in a loud tone, and the answer of the

* Domingo, 23 de Setiembre.

Commandant, were probably meant to reassure the sailors, who had already repeatedly complained of the length of the voyage.

At sunset Martin Alonzo Pinzon, mounting the stern of the *Pinta*, shouted, with all his might, "Land! land! Señor, I am the first who saw it; declare my right to the pension." Immediately all the sailors raised shouts of joy, whilst those of the *Niña* mounted, one after the other, the top-mast and became also assured it was land. At the sound of these exclamations, the Commandant, quite moved, fell on his knees, his gratitude taking precedence of his curiosity. He thanked God before having verified the discovery, which appeared to him certain; and, in his deep gratitude, intoned the *Gloria in excelsis Deo*. He must have believed that it was really land, confusedly perceived at a distance of twenty-five leagues. But time dissipated this illusion, and the despondency was the greater because hope had been so much excited.

The first of October, at daybreak, the lieutenant of service declared, with an accent of terror which he could not control, that they had made five hundred and seventy-eight leagues westwards from the Isle of Ferro. This figure cast them into the greatest dejection. Yet it was short of the real truth. The secret account kept by Columbus showed seven hundred and seven leagues. The man of Providence tried to reanimate the spirits of the sailors, and to encourage the pilots, not concealing his satisfaction that the winds and the waters coöperated in his enterprise.

The breezes, always propitious, pushed them on waves steadily serene. Columbus, thanking God for his bounty, could not refrain from writing in his Journal these words: "The sea is always fine; be infinite thanks rendered to God." The flotilla pursued its course, and the signs of land became multiplied. The pilots desired to diverge from the route, and go in search of islands which they considered must be in those latitudes; but the Commandant, though assured of their existence, absolutely refused

going out of his way. He was determined to go straight for the Indies. "To lose time on the way," said he, "would be to be wanting in prudence and reason." Murmurs were now changed into hatred.

SECTION VI.

So many times deceived by signs that seemed to indicate land, the crews no longer attached any faith to those illusory appearances. They fell into a state of sullenness, — a mark of the greatest discouragement. The sailors, at first, unknown to the officers, gathered in groups of three or four, to console each other in mutually confiding their fears to one another; but they only increased them by this communication. These meetings became daily more frequent and more numerous. The discontent having become general, no pains were taken to disguise it. As Spaniards, they naturally detested this foreigner, who had resolved, they said, to risk their lives with his own, to make him a great lord at their expense. They gave him the nicknames of *braggart* and *humbug*, in order to be able to speak of him, even in his presence, in disguised words. It is thus that revolts are commonly commenced. The old sailors considered the obstinacy of the Commandant in steering to the west, — which had no end, — was a mark of folly. They recalled to mind the sad presentiments of their families, the fright of the whole of Palos, and the opposition made by the cosmographers of Salamanca to this scheme of the Genoese. They regretted their confidence in the Superior of La Rabida, become the dupe of this intriguing braggart. All agreed that to push the voyage farther would be going to certain destruction.

Already they had proved to the Commandant the imprudence of his perseverance; but he paid no attention to such sage representations. Neither prayers nor representations could make any impression on his diabolical obstinacy. He heard their complaints, and saw their sadness and

anxiety, and did not the less drag them on to an inevitable death.

To this danger, admitted by all, was it not time to bring a remedy? They had already proved, perhaps, too much their obedience and their bravery, in penetrating into those regions which nobody had ever seen before them. Ought they, by a blind submission, to labor for their own ruin? As the Commandant, with his iron will, had no regard for their entreaties, and as nothing touched his proud obstinacy, they ought, at least, yielding to necessity, provide for their own safety, and make him submit to the common law of self-preservation, which he had so wickedly set at naught.

Was it right that a hundred and twenty men, the greater part of them Castilians and old Christians, should perish through the caprice of one, and, what is worse, a foreigner, — a Genoese? There was nothing more to deliberate about; he must be told to turn back to Europe; and, in case of his refusal, be cast into the sea, — that sea which he has so much admired. This was the only good counsel, and the only way of being delivered from a disaster. This rigor, being resorted to for the common safety, could not attach to the conscience of any one of them. It would not be a crime, but a measure of “prudence,” — a sacrifice to necessity. He may, then, be “prudently” cast into the sea; and it would be easy, on their return, to publish that he fell by accident at night, while observing the stars. Assuredly nobody would take the trouble of inquiring into the fact. They would not trouble themselves much about this Genoese in noble Castile.

It was agreed, then, that at night he should be cast from on board into the sea, at a moment that would be afterwards fixed. To carry the matter into effect, there was a secret agreement between the crews of the three caravels. We have proof that, during this voyage, the boats of the three caravels came often in contact with each other.

This conspiracy had almost every sailor as an accomplice, while it had yet nobody as chief.

The captains of the *Pinta* and the *Niña* were not ignorant of what was hatching against the Commandant; but, on the one hand, better informed and more experienced than the rest of the seamen, they did not participate in all their fears; on the other, they felt themselves, in fact, masters of the situation,—for, with the exception of some officers of the *Santa Maria*, the three crews, composed of their countrymen, were perfectly submissive to them. They abstained from all personal manifestations; still, without openly encouraging them, they took care not to prevent them. Many times, in their communications with the Commandant, the three Pinzons, by the loftiness of their airs and the grossness of their proceedings, made him sorely feel his isolation, and the strength of their position.

On Sunday, the seventh of October, at sunrise, a cannon shot from the *Niña* announced the appearance of land. The crews were full of hope; but evening came without making any discovery. Still, flocks of birds flew from the north to the south-west. Columbus knew that the Portuguese, in following such flights, discovered several islands; he therefore determined to change his course to west-south-west. This change was made only at nightfall.

On Wednesday, the tenth of October, the wind became favorable. The flotilla went ten miles per hour. It made fifty-nine leagues in a day and night. But this so desirable a fleetness only served to awaken the alarm of the crews. Seeing no end to the voyage, notwithstanding the constancy of propitious winds, they cried aloud that they were taken to their ruin! Their fears exploded; they refused going further, and put themselves in a state of open revolt.

Here the Commandant was in the most extreme danger that ever the chief of a flotilla was exposed to.

Several writers have repeated that at this moment Columbus, threatened by his crew, was obliged to promise them that he would turn back, if in three days they did not discover land. We feel it our duty to declare that these assertions are destitute of any foundation.

What occurred was the following : Martin Alonso Pinzon, hitherto sustained by the remembrance of his voyage to Rome, and his high opinion of the genius of Columbus, was now seized with the general terror. His confidence failed ; he ceased to resist the counsels of fear, and joined in the revolt with his two brothers.

Towards night, at the moment when, according to the orders of the Commandant, the three caravels should get quite close to each other,* the *Pinta* and *Niña* joined the *Santa Maria*. The Pinzons, followed by their men, all armed, jumped on the deck of the Admiral's ship, and, with fury in their looks, and steel in their hands, summoned him immediately to turn the prow to Castile. His own crew, his pilots, even the crown officers and the nephew of his wife, had joined in the revolt. He was "alone against all." His arguments, his assurances, his persuasions, were already exhausted. Against this harshness of resolution, and this unanimity of resorting to violence, there did not remain to him the resource of even a new objection ; besides, terror neither hears nor reasons. And yet he succeeded in appeasing the fury and calming the agitation of those rebellious spirits, whom the instinct of self-preservation was urging to crime. And not only did he not yield to their demands or their threats, but he dared even to interdict them any protestations of fidelity, or supplications for pardon ; and, in conclusion, declared to them, in a tone of authority, that their complaints would avail them nothing ; that he had started to go to the Indies, and that he intended to pursue his voyage until, with the assistance of God, he would find it.†

How explain this exasperation of feelings, this animosity, — increased by the fierce instinct of self-preservation, — so suddenly hushed before a foreigner, alone and cursed, whose word was no longer heard, whose rank and au-

* Las Casas, *Journal of Columbus*, seventh of October, 1492.

† *Miercoles*, 10 de Octubre.

thority were set at naught, and who invoked in vain the names of the sovereigns? Here we have something that no mariner, no philosopher, no man, not even Columbus himself, could explain on natural principles. So he himself did not attribute this victory to the superiority of his deportment in the presence of the revolt. Several months after this success, he avowed that when his crews "were all resolved, with one accord, to return, and had revolted against him, setting at naught his threatenings, the eternal God gave him the strength and courage he needed, and sustained him alone against all." *

SECTION VII.

From the dawn of the next morning the divine aid, which sustained him against the outburstings of so much wrath, and the ruthlessness of fear, became manifest. Notwithstanding the serenity of the atmosphere, and the softness of the balmy breezes, the sea became swelled. Large waves arose, pushing the caravels with a force not hitherto experienced. Some petrels appeared in great number. A green bulrush passed by the side of the *Santa Maria*. Soon after, the crew of the *Pinta* perceived a reed and a stick; then a second stick, which appeared to have been cut with a knife, and a small plank. The *Niña* also found some things: one was a branch of a tree, bearing some small red fruit. These signs sustained the hopes of the sailors during the day. The sailing had been excellent, and counted twenty-seven leagues.

The sun went down flaming into the solitary ocean. The whole of the horizon presented to the eye its pure azure. No vapor indicated that land was near; but suddenly, as if by inspiration, Columbus caused the first route to be taken, and ordered the helmsman to steer due west.

When the caravels came together, and after they had,

* *Jueves, 14 de Hebrero.*

according to the custom he established on board his vessel, sung the hymn to the Virgin, — the *Salva Regina*, — assembling all the men, he made them a touching address; recalled the favors with which the Lord had loaded them during the voyage, — giving them constantly favorable weather, leading them thus into those latitudes in which a sail had never penetrated, and conducting them, with such paternal goodness, through the dreaded paths of the GLOOMY OCEAN. He sought to raise their hearts in gratitude to the Author of these benefits; and afterwards assured them that they were very near the end of their fears, and the fulfilment of their hopes. Finally, he announced to them that they were approaching land, although their eyes could see nothing; and assured them that even that very night they would reach the end of their voyage. Consequently, he recommended to them to watch all night, and engaged them to pass the time in prayer,* because they would certainly, before day, see some island. He ordered the pilots to lessen the sails after midnight; and promised, besides the premium engaged by the Queen, a velvet doublet to the person who would first announce land.

The Commandant retired to his cabin. What passed there in the secret of his retreat? Feeling so near the realization of his hopes, what must not have been the fervor of his prayers! With what tenderness did he not thank the Divine Majesty for his constant protection!

About ten o'clock, Columbus mounted the poop. Scarcely had he got there, when he perceived a light in the distance; but, on account of the obscurity of the atmosphere, he would not assert there was land there. He called one of the King's officers, Pedro Gutierrez, and told him to look in the same direction. Pedro considered it was really a light. The Commandant then called Rodrigo Sanchez de Segovie, to show it to him; but while the latter was ascending to the poop, the light had disappeared. After a certain time the

* Herrera, *Histoire generale*, etc., Decade I., liv. I., chap. xii.

light reappeared once or twice. It was like a flame that ascended and descended alternately. By this movement, which the other mariners considered of no importance, Columbus was certain of the nearness of land.

At midnight, conformably to the orders of the Commandant, the vessels kept but little sail. They appeared to go rather slowly; still, a current took them strongly to the west. The *Pinta*, a good sailer, got far ahead of the other caravels. On each deck the expectation was the same, and the eagerness extreme. Electrified by the solemn assertion of the Commandant, all hearts throbbed with hope. Nobody doubted; no eyelid was closed. Suddenly a flash appears, and a cannon shot is heard. The sailors jump with joy: it was the signal of land! A mariner of the *Pinta*, named Juan Rodriguez Bermejo, had perceived it. The clock of the *Santa Maria* showed the time to be two in the morning. At the report of the cannon shot, Columbus, casting himself on his knees, and raising his hands to Heaven, while tears of gratitude overspread his cheeks, intoned the *Te Deum laudamus*, and the whole crews, transported with joy, responded to the voice of their chief.

It was not until after having fulfilled the duties of religion, that they yielded to the promptings of the joy that filled their hearts. An indescribable movement immediately took place in the three ships. By an order of Columbus, all the sails were furled, — there was left only the lug-sail; and they were to put to until morning. The prudence of the chief, who forgot nothing, thought it proper to put the flotilla in a state of defence; for they did not know what the return of day would bring. The arms were furbished, and preparations were made for a grand ovation. Friends and relations felicitated each other. The whole of the crew of the *Santa Maria* presented themselves before the Commandant, to offer him their respects, and to do homage to his genius.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Island of San Salvador. — The Archipelago of the Lucaya, or Bahama Islands. — Searchings for Gold. — The Island of Cuba. — Discovery of Hispaniola. — Hospitality of King Guacanagari. — First Settlement of Europeans in the Antilles.

SECTION I.

ON Friday, the twelfth of October, at dawn, there was seen issuing from the mists a flowery land, whose groves, colored by the first rays of the sun, exhaled an unknown fragrance, and charmed the eye by their smiling appearance. In advancing, the men saw before them an island of considerable extent, level, and without any appearance of mountains. Thick forests bounded the horizon, and in the midst of a glade gleamed the pure waters of a lake. Rolling land, covered by a vigorous vegetation, surrounded a shore to which they directed their course.

As soon as the anchors were let down, with great recollection, clad in the costume of his dignities, — with a scarlet mantle on his shoulders, and holding displayed the image of Jesus Christ on the royal flag, — Columbus descended into his boat, followed by the staff-officer. The captains of the *Pinta* and of the *Niña*, having the banner of the expedition, came each in his own cutter, with a detachment perfectly armed. In a short time all were on shore.

Columbus, beaming with gladness, and mute with delight, stepped on the shore with the elastic ardor of youth. Scarcely had he touched the new land than he significantly planted in it the standard of the Cross. Unable to contain

his gratitude, he prostrated himself in adoration before the Supreme Author of the Discovery. Three times bowing his head, he kissed, with streaming eyes, the soil to which he was conducted by the Divine Goodness; * all those who accompanied him participating in his emotions, and kneeling, as he did, elevated a crucifix in the air.† Raising his grateful hands, and thanking, from the depths of his heart, his Heavenly Father, Columbus found, in the effusions of his loving gratitude, an admirable prayer, the first accents of which are preserved by history: "Lord! Eternal and Almighty God! who, by Thy sacred word, hast created the heavens, the earth, and the seas, may Thy name be blessed and glorified everywhere. May Thy Majesty be exalted, who hast deigned to permit that, by Thy humble servant, Thy sacred name should be made known and preached in this other part of the world."‡ . . .

His gratitude and piety found utterance in sublime expressions. Then, standing up with majesty, and displaying the standard of the Cross, he offered up to Jesus Christ the first fruits of his discovery. In order to give glory to God, who had shown it to him, after having protected him from so many perils, he gave the island the name of *San Salvador*, which means "Holy Saviour."§

Afterwards he drew his sword, and, all the officers doing the same, he declared he took possession of that land in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, for the Crown of Castile. Then he ordered the notary royal, in presence of the commissioner of marine, and of the captains, to draw up the proceedings in the prescribed form.

* Ramusio, *Delle navigationi e viaggi raccolte*, vol. III., fol. I.

† Robertson, *History of America*, t. I, Book II., p. 120.

‡ This prayer of Columbus was afterwards repeated, by order of the Sovereigns of Castile, in subsequent discoveries. Fernando Cortez, Nuñez de Balbao, Pizarro, etc., had to use it officially.

§ "La llamo a gloria de Dios que se le havia mostrado, librando lo de muchos peligros, SAN SALVADOR." — Fernando Colon, *Vida del Almirante*, cap. xxv.

The Discovery having been accomplished, the conditions of the treaty with the sovereigns, signed in the Plain of Granada, became binding by the event; therefore the titles of "Viceroy," of "Grand Admiral," of "Governor-General of the islands and *terra firma* he would discover in the Indies," were definitively acquired by him. Immediately all those present, full of admiration and enthusiasm, recognized him as Admiral of the Ocean and Viceroy of the Indies, and as such they swore obedience to him. Many of them expressed deep regret for their conduct; they besought him not to remember their threats, which were excited by fear, and promised him a devotedness in future equal to their present submission.

The Admiral, having declared his having taken possession, ordered the carpenters to cut, with their axes, limbs of trees, and form a large cross from them. The island, which he had just offered to the Saviour, and named San Salvador,* was called "Guanahani" in the language of the natives. It is in the centre of the first line of the Lucayas, and occupies the middle of the prolonged group that forms the archipelago of Bahama. Although there was no habitation perceived in it, it was considerably populated; but the natives, frightened at the appearance of the caravels, which they took, some for monsters come from the sea, others for beings come from heaven, — retired to the thickest parts of the woods, trembling with fear.

While the notary-royal was engaged in writing the proceedings of the taking of possession, the islanders, who, until then, had remained concealed behind the foliage of the trees, gradually left their retreats, encouraged by the expression of serenity and benevolence in the aspect of Columbus, whom his high stature, his rich costume, the sheen of

*The English Protestants, not finding the name SAN SALVADOR fine enough for their marine charts, have substituted for it that of *cat*; and in their hydrographic atlases, the island of the Holy Saviour is nobly called *Cat Island*! —

his arms, and the deference he received from those around him, pointed out as the chief of those mysterious beings, — advanced by degrees ; and then ventured to approach, tremblingly, the strange visitors. They even felt them, to assure themselves they were not dreaming, and were particularly astonished at their beards. Following the example set them by the Admiral, the Spaniards received, with smiles of kindness, those artless children of the forest, and complacently submitted to their examinations.

Columbus observed that they were all young, and that they differed from the natives of Africa, in the color of the skin, and in the form of the head and limbs. In stature they were moderately tall, and in complexion they reminded one of the color of the natives of the Canaries. They had large heads and foreheads, thick hair, cut below the temples, and long behind ; the chin destitute of beard ; the limbs straight, and the trunk well-proportioned. They went in a state of complete nudity ; but they painted their members in different colors, — these in red, those in white ; some daubed the whole body, others only the face. Certain ones, undoubtedly the elegant and refined, contented themselves with painting only the nose. Their arms consisted of clubs hardened by fire, and armed at the end with the tooth of a shark, or a sharp flint.

Columbus considered that, from the kindness of their disposition, they could be easily made Christians, in using with them mild rather than harsh means. In order to make them well disposed, he distributed among them colored caps, glass beads, hawks' bells, and other trifles, which seemed to them of inestimable value. They respectfully offered the Spaniards everything they possessed. The latter passed the rest of the day in recreations and amusements in the groves.

As soon as the carpenters had completed their work, Columbus, still quite moved with gratitude, and his heart glowing with evangelical love, ordered the hole to be enlarged that was made for the pole of the banner planted on

this shore, — a shore now conquered to Jesus Christ. From this hole was erected the cross sustained by the hands of Columbus himself, while the hymn, *Vexilla regis prodeunt*, was sung. When the sacred sign was solidly fixed in the soil, he intoned the hymn of victory, *Te Deum laudamus*.

Columbus did not erect that cross in that place merely to leave a sign of prior occupation, but in order to consecrate, by that sign, the object of his discovery, and to be a memorial that he took possession of this advanced frontier of the New World in the name of the Redeemer of men, Jesus Christ. As the day was growing late, he said evening prayers before the image of the cross; afterwards, taking up the flag of the expedition, that *Labarum* with which he had conquered the horrors of the GLOOMY OCEAN, the dread of immensity, the caprice of the billows, and the mutinies of men, he returned on board his caravel.

Early the next day the natives surrounded the three ships in canoes made from a single piece of wood, hollowed, and of admirable workmanship for persons who did not know the use of iron. They brought balls of spun cotton, darts, and domesticated parrots, to trade with the foreigners. Everything that came from the wonderful strangers was precious to them; even pieces of broken glass were regarded as valuable treasures. They gave as much as twenty-five pounds of spun cotton for a mere trifle. But the Admiral, desiring that advantage should not be taken of their commercial simplicity, forbade these disproportionate exchanges and sales.

On the morning of the fourteenth of October, the Admiral set off at daybreak, with the long-boat of the *Santa Maria* and the boats of the caravels, to reconnoitre the other side of the island. The islanders, already informed of their coming, ran towards them, calling them, bringing them fresh water and provisions, and thanking God for the wonderful visit. They called to each other, and urged their relations who had yet remained at home, saying aloud to

them, "Come and see the men who came down from heaven; bring them meat and drink"; and immediately every man and woman ran towards them, each bringing something. They blessed God in their way, prostrating themselves on the ground and raising their hands to heaven. The Admiral remarked, in the midst of the deep forests, some kitchen gardens easily irrigated, some orchards, and "some stones suitable for the building of churches."*

The Admiral retained on board seven natives, whom he desired to take with him to Castile, to present to the sovereigns, to learn the Spanish language, to be made Christians, and to be afterwards sent back to their country.

Scarcely removed from the groves of San Salvador, Columbus found himself in a delightful embarrassment. In proportion as he advanced, there arose above the billows the rich verdure of numerous islands, pointing to every quarter of the horizon. The eye could not count them. The natives that were kept on board named more than a hundred of them, and there were many more still.

Not knowing where to commence the exploration of this archipelago, Columbus directed his course to the one that appeared the largest, at a distance of about seven leagues. He named it St. Mary of the Conception. In landing, he took possession of it in a solemn form; that is to say, in erecting a cross. This island, which had a level surface, appeared to be very fertile: by their features, their nudity, their confiding disposition and gentleness, the natives reminded one of those of San Salvador. Like the latter, they, too, admired the unearthly strangers, let them freely examine the land, and gave them, respectfully, whatever they demanded.

Columbus afterwards directed his course to another island, which, through circumspection for the susceptibilities of the King, he named *Fernandine*, even before

* *Columbus's Journal*. This remark, made the fourteenth of October, 1492, was not mentioned until the fifth of January, 1493.

he reached it. Its inhabitants, resembling those of the isles already visited, appeared still "more sociable, more civilized, and even more cunning." They bargained for, in place of taking, even what was offered them in exchange. They manufactured cotton, made hammocks, and mantles for married women. Their habitations, in the form of tents, testified that they were not deficient in taste.

Columbus walked through the woods, admiring, with a grateful heart, the magnificence with which he was surrounded. He sought to recognize the various kinds of plants that came in his way, but was often unsuccessful. The vegetation displayed an embarrassing luxuriousness; it was truly variety in the midst of infinity.

The natives having given him to understand that at some distance there was a large island called *Saometo*, the king of which wore clothes, and much gold on his person, the Admiral trimmed his sails to go immediately to it.

In landing there, he noticed the superiority of this island to the others he had seen. It abounded with superb forest-trees, and large lakes secured for it a delightful coolness. The grass was then as high as it is in the month of April in Andalusia. Every moment noisy flights of parrots, passing from one forest to another, obscured the sun by their number. The warblings and the brilliant plumage of vast numbers of birds unknown in Europe, and the purity of the air, struck him with surprise. The strange productions of this island, and its characteristic aspect, induced him to give it the name of the royal associate of his faith, of his hopes, and of his evangelical zeal. The island of Saometa was then named, by him, *Isabella*.

At the approach of the strangers, the inhabitants fled to the woods, taking with them all their ornaments, and leaving only their furniture. The Admiral forbade any of their things being touched, under severe penalties. By degrees the natives, seeing they were not pursued, returned to make exchanges. Some wore very small plates of gold suspended from their nostrils, which they willingly ex-

changed for bits of glass, cups, and porringers. He remained two days in this island, expecting, from what he had heard, to be able to trade largely for gold. He examined, with much interest, the soil and the vegetable productions. He says, himself: "The diversity of the trees, and of the fruits they bear, and of the perfumes with which the air is charged, fill me with astonishment and admiration; and it would seem that it ought to retain as a resident the person who has seen it only once."

In the midst of his happiness, Columbus was sorry that he did not know the botanical names and the properties of the vegetable productions. "I believe," he says, "there are here many trees and plants that command high prices in Spain, for dye-stuffs, medicines, and spices; . . . and my not knowing them is the greatest grief to me."

While walking on the shore of a lake, he perceived an iguana, — a reptile with claws, bristling scales, and a hideous head. To see him and attack him were the same thing for Columbus; for he considered it of importance to accustom Spanish intrepidity to making war on the destructive animals of this unknown region. The iguana precipitated itself into the lake; but, as the water was not very deep, he pursued it, and killed it with his lance. Its skin, which was preserved, was seven feet long. Columbus afterwards learned that this reptile, though of horrible aspect, is inoffensive in its habits.

SECTION II.

With his great desire for seeing the works of God, and acquiring gold, Columbus was confounded at the multitude of islands and lands, and the number of objects presented to his observation, as well as to his enthusiastic admiration. So he was obliged to remain satisfied with enumerating those new lands without giving detailed accounts of them. "My design is not to give the particulars of those islands individually," he wrote to the Queen, "because I could not

do so in fifty years, and because, on the contrary, I wish to discover and see as many countries as I can.”*

In this first voyage, his object was less to observe nature than to acquire gold, and that in considerable quantity. He sought gold, in order to make Spain interested in the matter of continuing the discoveries, by giving palpable proofs of their importance. He sought gold, especially, in order to commence the fund of the immense treasure he desired to amass. The deliverance of the Holy Land, and the purchase of the tomb of Jesus Christ, were always before his eyes,—the supreme object of his ambition. He desired, then, to collect, in order to convert them into gold, the spices of the Orient, the frontiers of which he believed he had reached. But it was gold that he sought particularly. Everywhere he inquired diligently about the land of gold. The sight of the precious metal exerted in him an ardent desire for it, and an almost loving eagerness. Never, perhaps, did a Christian desire gold for a like purpose. Not being able to find some as soon as he expected, he addressed himself to God, and besought Him to direct him to some, and to its beds.

At Isabella he noticed some little gold plates in the nostrils of the islanders, and there stopped, hoping he would be brought some gold in exchange for European trinkets. But it is not there that the auriferous veins lie, and therefore he directs his course to an island called *Cuba*, “where there are gold, spices, large ships, and merchants.” According to the descriptions given of it by the Indians, he presumes it to be, he says, the Island of Capingo, of which so many wonderful things are related. — “According to the globes I have seen, and the delineations in atlases, it must be situated in this region.”

The twenty-fourth of October, at midnight, the Admiral took his course for Cuba, according to the directions given him by the Indians on board. The course taken was west-

* *Columbus's Journal*, Friday, the nineteenth of October, 1492.

south-west. The sea, strewed with islets, being full of sand-banks, through which rocks pierce, the Admiral remained at the prow the whole night. The next day seven or eight islands were seen, which he called the *Islas de Arena*, or Sand Islands, on account of the shallowness of the waters around them.

SECTION III.

On Sunday, at early dawn, Columbus saw before the caravels, extending south-west, a land whose large appearance announced rather a continent than an island. Its high and airy mountains recalled those of Italy. The stamp of fecundity that marked this privileged land, in exciting his curiosity, struck his imagination with great force. In proportion as he advanced, and would distinguish one form from another, he could plainly see a power of vegetation unknown to him before. It was no longer that thick and tufted verdure, those watery plants, and those humid groves of the Lucayas; here the diversity and luxuriance of the vegetation struck him with amazement.

Columbus had now truly to regret his not knowing the names and the properties of the plants, of his being unable to contemplate only their forms, and of knowing nothing of the secrets Divine Bounty deposited in their virtues, or the harmonious relations these productions bore to each other.

Meanwhile, they saw the mouth of a river discharging calmly its limpid waters, and presenting a commodious harbor. When the caravels reached it, two canoes, having natives in them, were coming out. On seeing the boats of the caravels sounding the channel, the natives took to flight, and went to conceal themselves.

From the deck of his caravel, the view of Columbus embraced the two sides of the river, shaded, in their whole visible length, with very beautiful and very green trees, bearing, at the same time, fruit and flowers, upon which were flying birds of brilliant plumage, and little birdlets

with their sweet warblings. Among so many species of unknown vegetable productions, his genius for close observation distinguished several kinds of date-trees different from those that grew in Europe, in the Canaries, or on the coast of Africa.

Desirous of commencing his search for gold, and his collection of the products of the soil, the Admiral stepped into his long-boat, took possession of the land in the usual way, planted a large cross in it, gave the island the name of *Juana*, in honor of Prince Juan, and the port that of the *Saviour*, — San Salvador. Afterwards, seeing two houses at a distance, he went towards them. The inhabitants fled at his approach. He found there only a dog, cowardly, timid, and dumb, — the useless guardian of some fishing implements. He reiterated his commands that nothing should be touched, and then ascended the river a considerable distance.

Here the scenes presented to his view were such, that he candidly declares he cannot tear himself from them but with the hope of returning to them. He feels he is treading a soil specially favored by nature, and that he is bordering on the wonders of the equinoctial regions. He further declares that this island is the finest that has ever been beheld by the eyes of man.*

In the midst of this infinity of unknown objects, Columbus endeavored to seize the sublime idea of Creative Wisdom, to learn by what new marvel Divine Science has deigned to manifest itself to human understanding, and to lay hold of the index to some grand law of the globe ; for, from that time, he carried, in germ, all that he afterwards displayed in philosophical observation, and in his tendency to generalize facts.

His poetical ideas, his great views, and his inductions, never made him forget the practical, useful, and commercial side of things. After finding several date-bearing trees,

* *Journal of Columbus*, Domingo, 28 de Octubre.

he turns his attention to herbs, that are "as high at the end of October as they are, at Andalusia, in the month of May," and recognizes in certain plants the characters of portulaca and of nasturtium sylvestre.

The twenty-ninth of October, the Admiral weighed anchor, and sailed to the west, to go to the capital mentioned to him by the Indians. Soon they came to the mouth of a stream which he called the *River of the Moon*. Towards evening they discerned another, which he named the *River of the Seas*.

Two boats were sent to the shore to make inquiries; but the whole population, on seeing the strangers, became alarmed, and fled. The houses, which were like tents in a camp, were scattered here and there, without regularity, and presented the utmost cleanliness, with a kind of elegance in their plain furniture. There were found there some *statuettes* of female figures, and several wooden masks, carved with considerable ingenuity. There were also some dumb and cowardly dogs, left, uselessly, to guard the dwellings. Numerous fishing implements showed the kind of industry pursued by this tribe. The Admiral still forbade anything being taken.

Neither his religious raptures, nor the poetic effusions of his emotions, arrested nor retarded his cosmographic investigations. In enjoying the serenity of the calm nights, equally exempt from excessive heat and excessive cold, he asked himself why, in a latitude so little removed from the Bahama Isles, where the heat was intense, he now found a temperature so moderate. His reflections at once led him to attribute the heat of the Bahama Islands to their level, which is invariably flat, and to the absence of mountains, as well as to the constancy of the warm winds coming from the east.

The next day, the Admiral, continuing his route to the west, perceived a cape advanced into the sea, so richly covered with palm-trees that he called it the *Cape of Palms*. The Indians on board the *Pinta* told the captain that behind

the cape there flowed a river only four days' journey distant from Cuba. Martin Alonzo Pinzon had no doubt they were coasting, not along an island, but a continent, of which Cuba was the chief state. In consequence of his study of a planisphere by Toscanelli, lent him by Columbus, and which he kept three days, Martin Alonzo believed he had arrived in the country there hypothetically delineated.

Columbus thought that this vast country was, perhaps, the Asiatic continent, and that he was within about a hundred leagues of Zayto and of Quinsay.

On Friday, the second of November, the Admiral resolved, in order to remove his doubts, to send a message to the sovereign of this region. He chose, for this purpose, Rodrigo de Jerez, who had been formerly in Africa, and the polyglot Luiz de Torrez, a converted Jew, formerly attached to the family of the Governor of Murcia as preceptor, — to whom he joined two Indians, as casual interpreters. These messengers, provided with glass trinkets to procure provisions for their journey, were to go to the Grand Khan, and inform him of the arrival in his states of the Admiral, charged with a letter and presents from the Sovereigns of Spain, who were desirous of establishing amicable relations with him. Columbus gave them very particular instructions as to how they were to manage in this mission. During their absence, he ordered the ships to be repaired, but with the precaution of having only one on the side at a time, to guard against every surprise, and to keep, always, the other two ready for fighting, although, from appearances, nothing was to be feared from the natives.*

*Mr. Washington Irving considers it was in this region that Columbus and his men discovered the potato. We cannot avoid quoting his own graceful words: "In the course of their researches in the vegetable kingdom, in quest of the luxuries of commerce, they met with the potato — an humble root, little valued at the time, but a more precious acquisition to man than all the spices of the East." — *Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, Book IV., chap. iv. — B.

The messengers returned at the end of six days.

In place of the Grand Khan and his capital, they found only a village of about fifty houses, where they were received as if they had descended from heaven. The chief men of the inhabitants carried them in their arms to the principal house, and provided them with seats, while they themselves respectfully sat on the ground, surrounding them and kissing their feet and hands.

In returning, the messengers met, on their route, with many persons, women as well as men, who carried in their hands some dried leaves, rolled up in another leaf, in the form of a flageolet, and burning at one end while the other end was in their mouth, and which they sucked, inhaling the smoke, which they expelled from their lips in a little cloud. They called this kind of a flageolet or large cigar a "tobago," or tobacco, the name we have given to the plant itself.

The envoys had travelled through a country that was well cultivated and strewed with hamlets. They saw numbers of trees, of flowers, of balsamic herbs, and of birds that were unknown in Europe, except nightingales, partridges, and geese, which abounded there. They had not at any time heard the Grand Khan spoken of, and even the interpreters and the people could not understand each other about the meaning of the term. Nothing denoted the existence of any gold mines in that region.

But, if there was no gold there, there were souls to be saved and peaceable populations to be preserved; and Columbus augured well of their disposition for religion. His hopes in this respect he expressed to the sovereigns in these terms: "I hold it for certain, Most Serene Princes, that as soon as the missionaries will speak their language, they will all become Christians. I hope in our Lord that your Highnesses will immediately decide to send them, in order to unite to the Church a people so numerous; and that you will convert them as truly as you have overthrown those who would not confess the Father, the Son, and

the Holy Ghost" * (the Moors and Saracens of Spain). As in the ardor of his faith Columbus had no horror of death, he did not fear to present to the sovereigns the remembrance of it, which the courtiers so carefully kept out of view. He said, then, to their Highnesses: "And when you will have terminated your career" (as we are all mortal), "you will leave your kingdom in the greatest tranquillity, and purified from heresy and bad leaven. And you will be welcomed by the Eternal Creator." † With the same artlessness the messenger of Providence, letting his pen run freely, prayed God for their Highnesses, "that He would be pleased to grant them long life, a greater increase of kingdoms and principalities, and continue to give them the will and the dispositions for extending the holy Christian religion." ‡

Then he informs the sovereigns that he had put his vessel afloat the same day, and adds: "I go this day to the south-east to search for gold, spices, and unknown lands."

Following the indications given him by the Indians, the Admiral now directed his course to Babeque, where they told him by signs that gold was collected on the shores at night, by means of torches. He ran eighteen leagues along the coast without landing. The next day he perceived a cape, which he called *Cape Cuba*.

The fourteenth of November, directing his course to the east, he found himself in a new archipelago, or cluster of islands. The eye could not count their number. They were large, mountainous, and shaded with magnificent trees. The purity of the atmosphere, the glittering of the sea, interspersed with those masses of verdure which seemed to come from the waves, threw Columbus into raptures. He called this gulf, so richly studded with islands, the Sea of *Neustra Señora* (Our Lady).

On Friday, the sixteenth of November, at the moment

* *Martes, 6 de Noviembre.*

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*

that Columbus stepped out of his cutter to take possession of the first of these islands, in the form consecrated by his pious custom, there was seen lying on an eminence of the ground two very large beams of wood, one longer than the other, and the shortest placed across the long one, in the form of a cross, so exact that a carpenter could not have found juster proportions. Falling immediately on his knees, the messenger of the Apostolate thanked his Master for this new mark of bounty. He revered this Cross, that had been providentially prepared in this unknown island. It thus seemed to him that God would not abandon him; and he was consoled in the depths of his heart in seeing his desires anticipated in those desert and nameless places. After having "adored this Cross," figured by a mysterious causality, he gave orders that it should be completed, by having the pieces made fast, and that the erection of the sacred sign should take place the next day, Sunday, in the most conspicuous place.

On Sunday, the Admiral, with his staff-officer and the principal portion of the crews, went in procession in their boats, in order to erect the sign of Redemption. This Cross, which was very high and very beautiful, was elevated from a towering point, from which the trees could not conceal the view. The usual prayers accompanied its erection, and the whole of Sunday was consecrated to its honor by prayer and repose.

On Monday, the three vessels proceeded on their route, but, impeded by the billows and the winds, they made but little headway. The Admiral turned his course away from Isabella, from which he was distant only twelve leagues, fearing that at the sight of it the Indians of San Salvador would seek to escape; for their native isle was only eight leagues from the latter. But they appeared to be well satisfied with their new mode of life, — commenced to understand Spanish somewhat, made the sign of the cross, knelt before a crucifix, recited their prayers in raising their hands to heaven, and said the *Hail holy Queen* and the *Hail*

Mary, with a kind of recollectedness, persuaded that they accompanied men who came from heaven, and who would take them back to their country.

The twenty-first of November, the voyage was continued to the Island of Babeque, the treasures of which put their imaginations in a ferment.

Still, in the midst of the fatigues caused by these labors, subjects of discontent and inquietude were not wanting to Columbus. On board the *Pinta* and the *Niña* his orders were never punctually obeyed. The two captains allowed some expressions to escape them that were more injurious in the tone than in the terms. The brothers Pinzon, especially the oldest, could not bear the idea that a foreigner, who without their aid could not have undertaken the enterprise, should gather, in virtue of his treaties with Castile, a considerable portion of the riches of those countries. The ambition of Martin Alonzo was excited by envy. An Indian put on board the *Pinta* as interpreter, having mentioned to the captain the magnificence of Babeque, the route to which he pretended to know, Martin Alonzo separated himself from the other vessels the night of the twenty-first of November. The weather was clear and fine, and the air soft and cool. The Admiral, seeing the *Pinta* move off, caused a signal-light to be lighted, which was left to burn until day; but Pinzon paid no attention to it, and continued to sail to the east, where he disappeared in the shades of the horizon. This desertion afflicted the Admiral.

The *Niña*, commanded by Vincent Yanez Pinzon, remained faithfully at her post. Vincent Yanez had a relish for maritime affairs and for hydrography. He possessed a better knowledge of the theory of navigation, and of the obligations of duty, than his brothers did. Better than theirs also, his disposition inclined him to appreciate the genius of Columbus.

The twenty-third of November and the following day, the Admiral, continuing the navigation, approached the

Sea of Neustra Señora, on the coast of Cuba. He saw several capes, and discovered several ports admirable for their security; and in one of his excursions on the shores found some stones containing some gold, which he kept to show to the Queen. He also found some fir-trees, exceedingly tall and straight, and proper for ships. Here a mast was chosen for the *Niña*.

On the twenty-fifth he discovered a port, such as he had not yet met with. A hundred ships could have held there, without anchor or cable. Hills covered with fruit-trees, and timber fit for ship-building, protected it against all winds. Columbus, in the exuberance of his gratitude, declared that to this day, "It pleased Our Lord to show him every day something better than that of the preceding day; and that he went from good to better in all his discoveries." *

SECTION IV.

On the 28th, the ships entered a bay, surrounded with lands perfectly cultivated, forming a vast plain, studded with hamlets. The plain was bounded by some hills and high mountains. The Admiral, with his cutter, sounded the port, into which there was discharged a river deep enough for a ship to sail in. It is of this beautiful stream that he thus writes to their Highnesses in such glowing terms:—

"The amenity of this river, — the limpidity of its water, which is clear to the bottom; the numbers of palm-trees of different forms, the highest and most graceful I have ever seen, — an innumerable number of other high and verdant trees; the warblings of the birds, and the freshness of the air, — give this country, Most Serene Princes, a magnificence so wonderful, that in beauty and delightfulness it surpasses all others, as much as day surpasses night. It is this that has often caused me to say to my confidants that, whatever efforts I may make to draw up a complete report

* Las Casas. *Journal of Columbus*, 25 de Novembre.

for your Highnesses, neither could my tongue speak, nor my pen write, the whole truth. It is certain that I remain confounded at the aspect of a beauteousness so superior that I cannot express it. For I have written to you about other regions, in regard to their trees, their fruits, their vegetables, their ports and their characteristics, as well as I could, not as I should. But as to this land, everything goes to show that there is not a finer region in the world. I must now keep silent, desiring that others may see it who will love to describe it. Besides, I feel how little the excellence of such a country can be expressed by me, and how it will share a better fate from the lips or the pen of another.” *

In the first rank of the favors he received from God, Columbus put the happiness of having contemplated so many things, each one becoming always more admirable than the preceding one. He also thanked Him who had chosen him for this work for having preserved his health; “for,” said he, “thanks to our Lord, not one of the men of my crews has felt to this day the slightest headache; not one has kept his room from indisposition, if it be not an old sailor who suffered all his life from the gravel, and who found himself well after the second day of our arrival in this country. What I say in regard to health applies to the men of the three vessels.” †

Having intuitively a clear notion of the resources of the country, and of its preëminence over the others, when he contemplated all its harmonious relations, admired its splendor, extolled as a poet as much as a naturalist the richness of its vegetation, and the beauty of its waters and of its ports, — Columbus declares that in all he has discovered he comes to open new ways for human relations. Then, yielding to the exuberance of his thought, illumined from on high, he dares give counsel and a kind of precept

* Fernando Columbus. *Vita del Almirante*, cap. xxix.

† *Martes, 27 de Noviembre.*

to the sovereigns, his masters. With a liberty wholly Christian, he declares to them that they should not permit the access of a country so highly favored to any stranger, unless his purity of faith is unquestionable; because that this Discovery, having been made in the name of Jesus Christ, for the glory of the Redeemer and the extension of the Church, it is not just that heresy and infidelity should enjoy this conquest of Catholic faith. Making a *resumé* of his thoughts, he addresses to the Sovereigns these words: "And I say that your Highnesses should not permit any stranger to enter this country and traffic there, unless he be a Catholic Christian, since the project and execution of this enterprise had no other object but the increase and glory of the Christian religion." *

Notwithstanding their spontaneousness, these words, inspired by the sight of new magnificences, and written forty-eight days after the first landing at the island of San Salvador, during, and even before, the complete accomplishment of the Discovery, merit attention. These words, as well as their date, are of decisive importance in fixing the real character of Columbus's enterprise. It is no longer permissible to entertain any doubt of the true motives that guided the messenger of the Cross, or to misstate the object he proposed to himself. The glory of Jesus Christ, and the increase of his Church, and, consequently, the salvation of souls and the civilization of peoples, — such was the prime object of the efforts of Columbus.

Notwithstanding the hurry he was in, the wonders of nature in this place captivated the Admiral with their charms. It seemed to him as if he found himself in the midst of illusions and fascinations. This place, the

* Y digo que Vuestras Altezas no deben consentir que aqui trate ni faga pie ninguno extrangero, salvo Catolicos Cristianos, pues esto fue el fin y el comienzo del proposito que fuese por acrecentamiento y gloria de la religion Cristiana," etc. — *Martes, 27 de Noviembre.*

wonders of which, astonishing the mind, inspired respect and holy thoughts, received, therefore, the name of *Puerto Santo* (Holy Port). For three days he remained riveted with admiration to Holy Port, enraptured, without being able to satiate his eyes. Here his impatient thirst for gold seemed quenched in the serene sweetness of the atmosphere and in the fresh decorations of the forest, the fragrance of which was most grateful. The contemplator of Creation appeared, for a moment, to rule the messenger of the Cross, — the incomparable seeker of gold, anxious to open the placers of unknown lands, in order to obtain from them the price of the ineffable redemption of the Holy Sepulchre. He forgets himself in his admiration of the works of the WORD, and cannot tear himself from the charms of these aspects. Although, in briefly stating, in his journal, the natural beauties of this place, he modestly remains silent about his religious feelings, we may easily divine the ecstatic emotions with which his heart was delighted. With what happiness did not the adoptive son of the Franciscan family say his office, under the vaults of those perennial forests, the primitive temple of nature, and, surrounded with the prodigies of the Creator, mingling his voice with the grave psalmodies of the winds that traverse these solitudes.

Still, a mind so practical and positive as that of Columbus's could not consume, without immediate utility to his enterprise, the time accorded to satisfying the cravings of his soul. Profiting by his stay in this place, which some atmospherical contrarieties seemed to justify, he adopted some means for preserving the health of his men, and sent on different sides, under the command of an officer, accompanied with Indian interpreters, some armed pickets to reconnoitre the country, and put him in communication with the inhabitants. But the latter took to flight, and all their efforts were in vain. The Spaniards succeeded only in catching, in a village, some women and three children, and in surprising a small boat, the rowers of which they brought with them.

On Friday, the thirtieth of November, Columbus desired, before quitting Puerto Santo, to consecrate, by the sign of Redemption, this place, in which the magnificence of the WORD so resplendently shone. He ordered the carpenters to prepare a very large cross. The first of December, this large cross was taken, in grand procession, by the men of the two caravels, to the highest point that commanded the entrance to the port, and there erected, with all the solemnity that was possible, and firmly fixed in the solid rock.

At departing from Cuba, in order to leave it a significative name, Columbus called its eastern extremity *Alpha* and *Omega*, "the beginning and the end," because, for the moment, he considered it was there the Indies commenced on their western side, and that it was there, also, the east of Asia ended. It was the reciprocal point of the beginning and ending of the old world in the new.

SECTION V.

In his ardent love for the works of creation, it is in vain that we seek in Columbus a repining thinker, a sterile contemplator of nature. His admiration of landscapes, his persevering study of the flora and the fauna of these new regions, and his examinations of the soil from which he expected to procure gold and precious stones, did not absorb wholly his thoughts. With equal ardor, he tried to comprehend the character of that people who had so diligently fled at his approach. Not being able to see them or observe them, he intuitively comprehended them.

In truth, his relations with the natives of these countries, from the moment of his first coming in contact with them, were what the longest observation and experience would have dictated. He never committed an error or a mistake in regard to these peoples. He knew how to make himself understood by them, how to make himself loved by them, how to rule them by affability, and how to gain a personal ascendancy over their minds. His solicitude for their sal-

vation being his first object, he availed himself of every opportunity of inspiring them with a high opinion of the Europeans, in order that they may desire to resemble them, and adopt their customs. He desired by a constant magnanimity to show them the sublimity of the Gospel he came to announce to them. Were it not for the greedy cupidity of the crews, assuredly the Indians would have felt only gratitude and respect for the "celestial men," as they called them.

Never did Columbus neglect any circumstance or occurrence, however insignificant it may appear. Between the islands of Conception and Fernandine, meeting a native alone in a canoe, he caused him to be brought on board and well treated. It was found that this man was a courier sent from a part of the Lucayas, to announce the arrival of the "divine men." In order to obtain credence for this astonishing news, he carried with him two pieces of money and some glass pearls. Columbus, from this circumstance, concluded that his presence would be known far and wide, and therefore considered it of importance to spread with the news the good name of the men come from heaven. Prudence and good policy, so well in accord with his natural inclination, counselled munificence and gentleness towards this infant people. In advance, Columbus really loved them in Jesus Christ; he loved them first as the father loves the child that does not know him yet, and they, with their simple instinct, returned him confusedly something of his affection. They exhausted in his favor the little constancy which their unsteadiness of character possessed. In no time and in no place have the Indians testified to a European the confidence and attachment they did to him. Columbus had the nice gift of making himself loved and obeyed without constraint.

The Admiral having remarked the absence of all habitations on the shores of the sea and on the borders of rivers, notwithstanding the charms of those sites and their conveniences for residences, and seeing that all the huts were dis-

posed in such a manner that their inhabitants could see without being seen, sagaciously inferred from these circumstances that some general cause obliged them to vigilance, and that a common peril kept them on the alert. He conceived that a foreign race, hardier and better armed, arrived in canoes on these shores, to plunder the inhabitants. He learned, without having at first believed it, that in the peace and abundance of this smiling region, some atrocious robbers traversed the verges of the groves, not to rifle the huts, but to take away the inhabitants themselves, put them in pens like cattle, fatten them, and regale themselves with their flesh. This was only too true. The cannibal Caribs, foreign to those isles, distinct from the natives in color, in language, in their bodies being tattooed, in their arms, and in their blind courage, making irruptions into their islands, desolated their peaceable homes. Columbus expected the happiest change in the condition of these people, henceforward delivered from their oppressors through the protection of Spain, and enjoying the consolations of faith and the hope of eternal beatitude.

He blessed God for having sent him for this work of mercy, and already acted as a precursor of the Good News. Before speaking to the natives in a special manner concerning the Redeemer, whom he ardently desired to see them adore, Columbus wished to proclaim to the whole universe, in the language of the Catholic Church, the power of the WORD, in making the name of the well-beloved Saviour resound throughout these shores. Wherever his boats came he planted crosses, in order that the Indians may know in advance that this venerable sign was that of "celestial men," or of men destined to be such. The Protestant school has generally either remained silent about these plantings of the Cross, or given to understand that in erecting them the Admiral only wished to leave ostensible signs of his having taken possession of the lands. Here the distinction made in the things is opposed to everything like uncertainty in regard to the intentions and their object.

We will not permit a doubt to remain on this head, since the actions and their intentions have been clearly explained by Columbus himself.

Possession in regular form being once effected, the Admiral still planted crosses, choosing the most conspicuous and picturesque sites. In this he had more at heart the honoring of the Divine Redeemer than the attesting of his priority of discovery. As much as he felt admiration for the works of the Word, so much did he feel the necessity of glorifying before men the Saviour of mankind. Not only did he thank God for having chosen him to discover these new things, but he also thanked Him for having accorded him the honor of having first erected on these unknown shores the Cross, the immortal sign of conquered immortality. He considered himself in these lonely deserts as another John the Baptist, preparing the way for Him who was coming, with his sanctifying grace, under the symbol of the Holy Eucharist. Chosen by Providence, Christopher Columbus preceded the new apostles, his brethren the Franciscans, and his friends the Dominicans, who were soon to be followed by the holy emulators of Francis Xavier.

The Admiral took the greatest pains to open the understandings of the Indians he had on board,* and questioned them frequently, notwithstanding the non-success of his questions, and the confusion in the answers. He noticed, from the first days, their proneness for the exaggerated and the fantastic. Their most positive assertions never merited more than half confidence.

Columbus had not only to distrust the explanations of the interpreters, but he had, also, to guard against the assertions of the *savants* and of travellers, with which his mind had been imbued. It was necessary for him to have some distrust of what he saw, what he heard, and what he remem-

* Columbus had, in all, twenty Indian men and women, and three children, on board the caravels.

bered. Naturally, he could explain the things he met with, only by the things he knew already; for, in its march, the human understanding attains the unknown only by the known. Columbus had read the cosmographers, the geographers, and the travellers, and Marco Polo, as the others. Among all these works, the Tableau of the World, *Imago Mundi*, of Cardinal Peter d'Ailly, appears to have exercised an influence on his judgment, in which the author's ecclesiastical rank and his orthodoxy had no less a part than his scientific knowledge. The penetration and presentiments of Columbus, indeed, we may say, his instinct of revelation, prevented him from getting lost in the perplexities of systems.

It has often been said and repeated, that Columbus quitted Cuba persuaded that he had found the extremity of the Asiatic continent. This, again, is one of those traditional errors in regard to him which has been accepted without examination. We will dissipate it, further on, by the evidence of facts and documents. Even the generic name of Indies, given by the Admiral to the lands discovered, and that of Indians to the inhabitants, make nothing against our view. The name was, in advance, destined by Columbus for the lands he would discover. This is what he says to his son Fernando: "As the Indies are considered throughout the whole world as abounding in gold and every kind of riches, he wished to give the same name to the lands he designed discovering, in order to oblige Castile to favor his enterprise by the hope of a great advantage."* Undoubtedly, the physiognomy so characteristic of Cuba led for a moment to the belief that he had attained the extremity of the Asiatic continent; but more frequently, through his spontaneous apperceptions, he thought he had reached the advanced frontiers of a totally new world. Besides, in his first voyage, the contem-

* Cotelendy, *La Vie de Cristofle Colomb et la Decouverte*, etc. Paris, chez Claude Barbin, 1681.

plator of nature sought less to explain than to mention the regions reached by his caravels.

SECTION VI.

In directing his course to the invisible Babeque, the Admiral perceived to the south-east a land which the Indians told him was Bohio, where human beings were eaten. They appeared to have a horrible dread of the people of Canniba,* who remained in this island or its vicinity. They said these ferocious depredators fed on human flesh, had the head of a dog, and only one eye, in the middle of the forehead. When they saw the Admiral, notwithstanding what they told him, continue the route to Bohio, they became stupefied with fright, and speechless. Driven by the breeze, the caravels were rapidly taken towards the mysterious island.

The sixth of December Columbus entered a little bay, which he placed under the patronage of the Virgin. At the south-east of this bay, a beautiful cape was seen, which he named in honor of Mary, the star of the sea, *Cape Star*. Several promontories and harbors were also seen, to which he gave names. He continued to sail in sight of the coast; and, at the "hour of vespers," † he cast anchor in a port admirable for its safety and the magnificence of its site, which he named *St. Nicholas*, in honor of the saint of whose feast this was the day. Columbus declared, that after all he had said of the ports of Cuba, this one may still be justly praised, for "a thousand caracks could here anchor in safety."

On Friday, the seventh of December, they steered for

* Hence is derived the word *cannibal*, a man-eater.

† The piety of Columbus, his custom of saying regularly the office at the hour fixed by the Rule of the Franciscans, make him involuntarily say in his Journal, "*at the hour of vespers*," to indicate the time in the afternoon he reserved for this religious duty. This expression has often escaped him without his being aware of it.

the north-east. They discerned at a distance some high mountains, and in the intermediate plains, some fields and hillocks. The general aspect of the country differed from the tropical physiognomy of Cuba, and vaguely reminded them of Castile.

The eighth of December, the day of the Immaculate Conception, a heavy rain, accompanied with wind, kept all on board. The Admiral could freely satisfy his tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin. During the hours of office he caused salvos to be fired in honor of Mary, conceived without sin.

The next day the rain continued. The wet weather, the form of the clouds, and the condition of the atmosphere, recalled to the minds of the Spaniards the month of October in Andalusia. The plains, they perceived, also reminded them of Castile; and on account of this resemblance, — so sweet to them, — the Admiral gave the name of *Isla Española* to the island. The natives had several names for it; some called it “Bohio,” which signifies “mansion, or vast dwelling”; others, in smaller number, called it “Haiti,” which means “high land”; but the larger number called it “Quisqueya,” a word meaning “the great land, or the great all”; for these people knew of no land that was more extended.

The Castilians sometimes called it “Little Spain,” “Hispaniola,” and sometimes simply by the abbreviation, “Espagnol.”

The twelfth of December, Columbus consecrated his taking possession of the island of Hispaniola by a sign congenial to his piety. In the presence of his two crews, he caused a very large cross to be planted at the entrance of the port, on an eminence, seen from a great distance; not simply to show the prior claims of Castile, and her possession of it, but “principally,” he says, “as a sign of Jesus Christ, our Lord, and in honor of Christianity.” *

* “Y principalmente por señal de Jesu Cristo Nuestra Señor,y honra de la Cristianidad.” — *Miercoles 12 de Diciembre.*

During six days the Admiral tried uselessly to enter into communication with the natives. The latter always fled at the approach of the strangers, but at the close of the religious ceremony just mentioned, a female was caught, who was brought on board the *Santa Maria*. "She was very beautiful and young, and had a gold ring in her nostrils." She conversed with the Indians of the caravels, their language being familiar to her. The Admiral caused her to be dressed in European fashion, and after ornamenting her with some glass trinkets, sent her back home with three Indians, who were to speak to the inhabitants. But the three interpreters, detained by dread, dared not follow the young woman to the village, and returned to the caravels at three o'clock in the morning.

The Admiral sent nine armed men, resolute and intelligent, with an Indian interpreter, to reconnoitre the country and get into communication with the natives. They found a deserted village four leagues and a half distant. On seeing the strangers, the inhabitants fled, after having concealed all they possessed. The Indian interpreter ran after them, hallooing to them to return, that the strangers were not from Canniba, but that on the contrary they came from heaven, and were giving beautiful things to those they met with. By degrees the natives approached, and to the number of two thousand surrounded the nine Spaniards, whom they gazed at with veneration, mingled with fear. They brought from their huts the best provisions they had, to offer them to these guests who had come from heaven. During these transactions, there came a number of men bearing reverently on their shoulders the female Indian who had received the gifts from the Admiral. A part of her jewels was carried with great ceremony before her, and an immense crowd, led by the husband of the woman, went to the caravels to thank the chief of the celestial men for his presents. The interpreter having heard on board that the Admiral desired to have a domesticated parrot, mentioned the circumstance, and immediately they brought

parrots from all parts as pure gifts, desiring to receive nothing in return for them.

The nine Spaniards returned with this cortege. They noticed, in the course of their journey, a beautiful country, and some cultivated fields. Although it was in the middle of December, the trees were green and laden with fruit, and herbaceous plants were high and in flower, the same as in Castile in the month of April.

On Friday, the Admiral set out anew in quest of the island of Babeque, so much praised by the Indians for its gold. The next day, coming again near the Island of Hispaniola, he met with a canoe managed by one Indian. He admired the intrepidity of the islander, who, in that fragile concern, had dared to confront so strong a wind. He welcomed him on board the caravel, showed him every kindness, gave him glass marbles and other trinkets, and landed him near the village where he resided. Then he cast anchor in a neighboring port, which he named "The Port of Peace," and waited for the result.

What the Admiral had foreseen was soon realized. The Indian displaying the rare presents he had received, soon his countrymen congregated around him, while he vaunted the munificence of the men descended from heaven. Still, he did not have the joy of announcing to them a circumstance that was altogether new. Already had the report of these heavenly voyagers reached these quarters, and the announcement of this last event was soon propagated from one village to another. More than five hundred islanders resorted to the anchorage. Among them some women, of remarkable beauty, wore in their ears and nostrils some little plates of very fine gold, which they gave joyfully, having nothing else to offer. The Admiral gave a strict charge that they should all be treated with the greatest propriety and respect, as if they were already Christians; "because they are," as he wrote to the sovereigns, "the best people in the world, and because I have great hope

in our Lord that your Highnesses will make them all Christians." *

The eighteenth of December, at early dawn, the Admiral, faithful in his devotion to the Blessed Virgin, had the flags and pendants of the caravels displayed, and the day being commemorative of one of her festivals, he ordered it to be saluted with a discharge of artillery. After the "hour of vespers," the young king of the country arrived, borne in a palanquin, and accompanied with two grave personages, probably his ministers, or at least his counsellors. The Admiral was just then taking dinner. The king was not willing that he should be apprised of his visit. He entered with a quiet air into the hall, went straight up to the Admiral, saluted him courteously, sat down by him, and with a wave of his hand commanded his guards to retire, which they did, with marks of profound respect. He retained with him only the two grave personages, who sat at his feet. The Admiral ordered him to be served with dinner, thinking he had invited himself, but he merely tasted what was offered him, doing this only to respond to the politeness of the Admiral, and then sent the rest to his followers. After dinner, at a sign from him, one of his officers brought him a belt ornamented with plates of gold of delicate workmanship. The young king offered it to the Admiral, who, after having graciously accepted it, conducted him through the caravel and introduced him into his cabin. As the young monarch looked with a wistful eye at a counterpane on the bed, Columbus made him a present of it, adding to it a collar of beautiful amber beads he had round his own neck, a pair of red buskins, and a flask of orange-flower water, — hoping by these presents to conciliate his good will and attract him the more easily to Christianity.

The Admiral showed him a crucifix; he also showed him portraits of the Spanish sovereigns, and spoke to him

* *Domingo, 16 de Diciembre.*

of their grandeur and power. But the young monarch and his counsellors believed that the kingdoms of these sovereigns was in heaven, and not on earth. When he descended into his canoe, to regain his palanquin, he received military honors.

After his departure, his brother came on board with a boobyish air, and meanly begging for some gewgaws. They learned from him that, in the idiom of the country, the sovereigns were called *Caciques*. If the Admiral did not this day obtain much gold, it was not because he did not hear much said about it. An old Indian informed him of an island "wholly gold," and of others, where the precious metal abounded in such quantity that no pains were needed but to gather it.

The Admiral would not leave without honoring, on this shore also, the emblem of Redemption. He had a very large cross made, and planted in the middle of the settlement, to make the people familiar, in advance, with the sacred sign. They flocked to it with eagerness, and knelt before the sacred symbol, the signification of which they did not understand, and endeavored to imitate the actions and words of the Spaniards during their prayers. Judging of the future by their present happy dispositions, Columbus "hoped in our Lord that all these islands would become Christian."

The next day, before dawn, they put to sea, to continue their reconnoissance of the coast of Hispaniola.

On Friday, the twenty-first of December, the Admiral discovered a port incomparably superior to any he had yet met with. It was not necessary here to call the natives; fame had preceded the arrival of the men come from heaven. Late in the evening, a canoe, thronged with persons impatient to see them, came to the caravels. The next day the shore was crowded. Men and women offered their gifts to the celestial strangers; some, a little gold; others, a calabash of fresh water and some yam bread, pleasant to the taste. They appeared to have no great possessions.

“Men and women were as naked as they were when they came from the bosoms of their mothers,” says Columbus; and he ordered the greatest decency to be observed towards these simple children of nature.

He received repeated messages, beseeching him to visit a neighboring settlement before leaving this quarter; and, as the place was on his way, he went there. The cacique, who had come to meet him, accompanied him, with his attendants, to an eminence above the strand, where there was a crowd anxiously waiting to see him. All of them besought the chief of the celestial voyagers to go no farther, and to remain with them. But some messengers came from another cacique, also, praying him not to depart until their master would see him. The Admiral willingly acceded to the request. This cacique had a large quantity of provisions prepared, with which he loaded the Spanish boats. Afterwards, his subjects desired, in their turn, to give provisions and parrots. They besought Columbus, earnestly, that he should go no farther; and when they saw him embarking, notwithstanding their entreaties, they followed him, in their canoes, to the caravels. Columbus treated them with great kindness, and gave them glass beads, brass rings, and little bells: “Not because they asked for them,” says Las Casas, “but because he considered it becoming, and that he already regarded them as Christians.”

On Saturday, the twenty-second of December, the chief monarch of the country, the Grand Cacique Guacanagari, a young and gracious sovereign, in his desire of seeing, also, the men come from heaven, sent one of his chief officers to invite the Admiral to bring his vessels near his residence, and to offer him a belt, to which was suspended, in the form of an alms-box, a mask, made of light wood, but whose large ears, tongue, and eyes, were of pure gold. This envoy understood but very little of the language of the Indians of San Salvador, and these understood as little the idiom spoken by himself; which caused them to spend part

of the day in uselessly questioning and answering each other. It became necessary that Columbus, explaining their reciprocal mistakes, should divine, from their signs, the object of this message. The next day was Sunday. Although the Admiral, as Las Casas observes, "was not in the habit of sailing on such a day, not from superstition, but through piety, he nevertheless decided to do so, in order to have an opportunity of displaying the symbol of Redemption on these coasts, on this day which pertained to the Lord, and in consequence of the hope he had conceived that the inhabitants would become Christians." In the afternoon, more than a hundred canoes, filled with persons curious to see him, surrounded the caravels. Each one brought his own little present.

The wind having lacked, the Admiral could not go to the Grand Cacique Guacanagari, but he sent the notary-royal and some officers, in boats, to salute him in his name. During this time, an inferior cacique appeared on board the *Santa Maria*, informing him that there was much gold in that island, that persons came to buy it from neighboring countries, and that as much of it could be had as was desired. The Admiral, moved at this news, and transported with hope, thanked his Divine Master with his whole heart. And still, as if he would redress this, perhaps, mundane joy, he made an act of submission of his will to that of God, and wrote, with edifying resignation, in his Journal: "May our Lord, who holds all things in His hands, be pleased to vouchsafe to me what is most for His service."

An irresistible curiosity urged the neighboring people to come to the caravels. More than a thousand people came in canoes, each one bringing some gift; and, for want of room, more than five hundred ventured to swim, in order to get a sight of these unearthly strangers. Five caciques, with their families, had come. The Admiral gave presents to all, judging that the little gifts would be well employed.

The news about the gold became confirmed more and more. Some of the visitors spoke to Columbus of mines

being in the island. A native, who appeared to be wonderfully attracted to him, mentioned several places that produced gold. Among other places he named Cibao (the Admiral thought he meant Cipango), whose cacique had a banner of pure gold. This country, he said, was distant, and situated to the east. Columbus considered they were approaching some auriferous mines; and piously thirsting for gold, and generously craving for riches, with a fervid accent he besought his Master to guide him at once to the place where it would be found, and could not refrain from exclaiming, "May our Lord in His great mercy aid me in finding that gold."

During the night, the boats came back with the notary royal and officers sent to Guacanagari, the cacique. On their route they were pressed with a crowd of canoes, filled with persons desirous to see the celestial men. Conducted to the royal residence, they were received with great ceremony. Guacanagari, who regretted much not seeing the Admiral, sent him, while awaiting his visit, some parrots, with several pieces of gold.

SECTION VII.

On Monday, the twenty-fourth of December, before day, the Admiral, by a good land wind, left the port; steering to the east, in the direction where he was told the gold mines were, and with the intention, in passing, of visiting the grand cacique, Guacanagari. The wind having ceased, they made but little progress that day. The *Niña* was half a league behind.

After eleven o'clock at night, the Admiral felt much fatigued. For two consecutive days and the preceding night, the concourse of the natives, the presents to be given and received, the exchanges to be watched over, the questions to be put to interpreters, and their answers, the classifying and preservation of the different productions of these countries which he wished to take to Castile, his religious

exercises, and the multiplied cares of the command, did not leave him a single minute for rest. Yielding to his need for repose, an hour before midnight he went down to his cabin and flung himself on his bed, undressed. He had reason to be perfectly easy in regard to the situation of the vessel. The sea was calm, they were in known quarters which the boats had sounded a few days before, and, besides, there was an officer to watch over the helm.

Still, notwithstanding the order, often repeated during the voyage, that the helm should not be intrusted to boys or novices, as soon as the Admiral lay down the officer did the same. An hour after, the helmsman, giving the rudder to a cabin-boy, got to his hammock, and the rest of the mariners who had the watch took like advantage of the absence of the Admiral to sleep at their ease. The cabin-boy in his turn became sleepy, and the *Santa Maria* was carried insensibly, by the currents, against a sand-bank. For more than a league the roaring of the breakers was heard, but so sound was the sleep of the crew that they did not awake but at the voice of the Admiral; for the latter, at the first cries of the cabin-boy, alarmed at the shock, jumped from his bed, and was the first on deck to render assistance, before anybody else even suspected the accident.

The Admiral ordered them to take the boat and carry out an anchor astern, to warp the vessel off. The master and the men jumped immediately into the boat, but in place of executing the manœuvre, they rowed away in all haste to save themselves in the *Niña*, which was anchored half a league windward. The captain of the *Niña* was unwilling to receive on board these pusillanimous deserters. They were, therefore, forced to return to the caravel; but the boat of the *Niña* reached it before they did. The Admiral, seeing that his boat deserted him, that the ship had swung across the stream, and that she had already leaned to one side, so that the water was gaining upon her, tried to cut the mast, in the hope of lightening her and setting her afloat. But he did not have men enough to do

these things, and he was obliged to abandon the idea. The keel was too firmly bedded in the sand to have her put to rights. He abandoned, then, to Providence the body of the ship, hopelessly lost, and passed to the *Niña*, to have his crew transhipped to her. The sea at last broke on the body of the vessel, but without sinking her; the seams alone opened, but the hull remained whole. At daybreak, he despatched Diego de Arana and Pedro Gutierrez to the cacique Guacanagari, to inform him of the disaster.

The news moved the king even to tears. He immediately sent all his people, with all the canoes that could be mustered, to Columbus, to aid him in discharging the vessel, and took measures for the preservation of the things saved from the caravel. From time to time he sent to the Admiral to console and cheer him, and to tell him that "he would give him all he possessed." So active was the assistance, that in a few hours the vessel was unloaded. Guacanagari gave his visitors three large buildings for their effects, and placed armed guards for their safety from injury or theft. Such was his care, and such the honesty of his people, that in the transportation of the cargo and munitions of the caravel the least thing was not lost. The sympathies of the people for Columbus in his loss, and the reception he received from the sovereign, mitigated the bitterness of the accident. In no part of the civilized world would he have received warmer or more cordial hospitality.

Always submissive to God, and knowing that He often draws good from what appears to us to be evil, Columbus, in reviewing in his mind the diverse circumstances of this disaster, — how it happened without any fault on his part, in the absence of either storm or fog, in spite of all his efforts to save the ship; and considering that nothing that the *Santa Maria* contained was lost, — was led to think "that Our Lord willed it so to happen, that he might remain in this place."* In reality, he could leave in the

* *Domingo, 6 de Enero.*

states of a hospitable prince a part of his companions, who could learn the language of the natives, teach them the Christian religion, and amass gold, during his return to Spain. Several of the sailors requested to be left in the island. Guacanagari was delighted to see these extraordinary beings preparing to settle near him. As sometimes some Carib cannibals landed on the coast, and took away his subjects, he expected, by these powerful strangers, to be protected against them. The Admiral, to strengthen him in his confidence, showed him the use of the Spanish arms, — of arbalets and Moorish hand-bows, and the slaughter that may be produced by artillery. He wished, in explaining to him how he could become redoubtable to the Caribs, to inspire him with the respect that is commanded by force, in order that, as occasion may require, he may substitute fear for benevolence. The erection of a fortress, or rather a *fortlet*, was then decided on. Such a building, incidental, and almost forced, would be a proof of priority of occupation, and thus guard against any ulterior claims on the part of other Europeans.

Every day the relations between the Admiral and King Guacanagari became more intimate. The prince entertained for Columbus sentiments of the highest admiration and respect, and had the greatest confidence in him. His intelligence, awakened by a lively curiosity, urged him to look up to these mysterious beings, and to endeavor to imitate them. Grave in his manners, he displayed great dignity and nobility of soul. While his officers and people, eager for hawks' bells, which they called *chuke*, got in raptures at glass trinkets and gew-gaws, for which they gladly exchanged gold, cotton and provisions, the cacique, wearing a shirt, preferred gloves to everything else; and, in return for gold masks, gold mirrors, and golden crowns, he only asked for a simple wash-pitcher and ewer, to wash his hands in after meals, in place of rubbing them with odoriferous herbs, as was his custom before he had seen the Admiral. Generosity seemed natural to him. He

never saw the Admiral without presenting him with some gift. He gave, like a true prince, for the sole pleasure of giving. The etiquette observed at his court presented the rudiments of a nascent civilization, which was not wholly deprived of elegance and taste in the midst of its simplicity.

Still, the devotedness which Guacanagari manifested towards all the Spaniards ought not to be confounded with his general admiration for the superiority of the divine men. What attracted him especially to them was Columbus himself. Savages, like children, judge by instinct of things which they cannot explain; it is so with them in regard to persons and to sentiments. They are never mistaken about those who love them. The artless monarch felt himself attracted towards the grandeur of Columbus; a deep fellow-feeling attached him to that unearthly man, and all his favors to the strangers were directed towards their chief.

One of the characteristics of the genius of Columbus, and of his providential *role*, was, undoubtedly, his quick aptitude for the sciences and occupations to which he was most unaccustomed. It was this that enabled him to do to perfection everything useful that was connected with the interests of which he was the depository. The shipwreck of his caravel made him an engineer. He designed the plan of a fortress, or a little square castle with bastions at the angles, and directed personally the works.

The activity of the Spaniards, aided by the subjects of Guacanagari, soon did wonders. Ten days after the wreck of the *Santa Maria*, this strong fortress was raised on the shore. Beneath it was a vast cave, which was to serve for provisions and munitions of war, and also for the merchandise destined for trading.

To guard this fortress, over which waved the flag of Castile, Columbus chose, among the crew of the *Santa Maria*, the men who appeared most steady and best disposed. He joined to them Bernardin de Tapia, Doctor Juan, the "genteel surgeon," the metal-founder and jew-

eller of Seville, an armorer, a ship-builder, and a tailor, — and placed them under the command of Diego de Arana, to whom he delegated all the powers he himself had received from the Sovereigns. He gave him as lieutenant, Pedro Guttierrez, a King's officer. This nucleus of a colony was composed, in all, of forty-two men.

Authority being thus established, Columbus furnished this advanced guard of the Old World with all that was found in the *Santa Maria*; left it instruments, utensils of every kind, biscuit for a year, some wine, a good supply of arms, artillery, and the long-boat of the wrecked vessel. The Admiral left them a quantity of seed to sow in the land, intrusted them with the merchandise with which they were to barter, and recommended, in a particular manner, the three officers to the cacique, Guacanagari.

Columbus left the Spaniards, then, on this new soil, in the best condition that could be wished, — provided abundantly with everything necessary for life, in safety from attack, surrounded with a friendly population, and under the protection of a generous monarch. Before leaving them, he made the most touching address that ever was delivered by a father to his children. He gave them admirable counsels about foresight and sagacity. He recalled to them the glorious object of the Discovery, — the propagation of the faith; besought them to study the language of the natives, and to attract them to Christianity by their example and their teaching. In the name of the Sovereigns, he commanded passive obedience to the officers he had invested with his own powers. The Admiral recommended to have the greatest regard for the sovereign of the country, to avoid all disputes with his subjects, to observe the most rigorous continence in regard to women, to never separate from each other, never to go alone, always to sleep in the fortress, and, especially, never to leave the states of the hospitable king who had given them a welcome.

One cannot avoid having feelings of admiration for him, in collecting the enfeebled echoes of his excellent exhorta-

tion, sealed with an almost testamentary solemnity, which have been transmitted to us by the Spanish historians, Herrera and Muños. And, when we remember the events that took place a short time after, we are struck with the lucidity of the foresight of Columbus; we see in it a solicitude and a sagacity in regard to eventualities, which surpass human prudence.

The second of January, the Admiral bade his last adieus to Guacanagari. He gave him a new shirt, put a collar of African gems on his neck, a scarlet mantle on his shoulders, red buskins on his feet; and on his finger a silver ring, which the latter preferred to gold; and embraced him with such Christian, paternal good-will, that the artless cacique, who already loved him sincerely, not being able to restrain his feelings, burst into tears.

On the fourth of January, the *Niña* left the harbor and steered eastwards, in the direction of a lofty promontory, which the Admiral named Monte-Christo (Christ-Mount). Columbus made his observations as a hydrographer, as a naturalist, and as a poet, and his untiring admiration for the works of nature shows itself, still, in his Journal. Two days after, the *Niña*, continuing her course to the east, a sailor, who was on the look-out, discerned a sail ahead. It was the *Pinta*, which a strong breeze drove towards the Admiral.

Vainly did Martin Alonzo Pinzon hope that the ocean, in its immensity, would conceal his desertion. Providence brought him back beneath the eyes of his chief, in sight of the little *Niña*, that imperceptible point in an incommensurable expanse. Forced by the wind to rejoin the Admiral, the captain of the *Pinta* followed him to the port of Monte Christo, and came on board his ship to excuse himself. The reasons he gave for his separation were all false, and several of them plainly contradictory. Still, Columbus appeared to believe them, for fear of aggravating the evil, as the two vessels were commanded by Pinzons, and the greater part of the two crews was composed of their rela-

tives or their fellow-townsmen from Palos. Upon every occasion, especially since the Discovery, the eldest of these brothers made him grievously feel his isolated condition, and his quality as a foreigner. He knew what excesses his pride and his rudeness, excited by envy, were capable of. He restrained himself, says Las Casas, "from yielding to the temptations of Satan, who sought to prevent the voyage, as he had done at the commencement." He became resigned, and sacrificed his self-love, his sense of justice, his personal dignity, to a duty which was of still greater importance than his rights.

Martin Alonzo Pinzon, having made his crew accomplices in his crime, passed sixteen days at the mouth of the river Rio de Gracia, trading in gold, contrary to the orders of Columbus. At the time of his departure, joining violence to rapine, he took away, by force, four men and two young girls, as slaves. But the Admiral obliged him to disseize himself of his iniquitous prey, comforted the Indians, made them presents, in order to make them forget the injury, and put them ashore, so that they could return to their families.

Notwithstanding his desire of coasting Hispaniola, the conduct of the Pinzons showed the Admiral the necessity of regaining Castile as soon as possible. The bad condition of the caravels, also, demanded it.

The eighth of January, near Rio d'Oro, or Golden River, — thus named because of the particles of gold seen in its sands, — he perceived, at a certain distance, three sea-calves, which elevated themselves above the surface of the waters. They reminded him of those he had formerly seen on the coast of Guinea, and which, at a distance, had some traces of the human face. They were mermaids, — the syrens of the ancients. He adds, that they are not the beautiful beings they have been represented to be.

The ninth, they sailed to the north-east, and saw Cape Roja. The aspect of the coast was enchanting. But he could not spare time to make examinations and observations; he longed to return to Castile, in order to have no

further connection with Martin Alonzo Pinzon, and to inform the Queen of the fact of the Discovery. His mission once fulfilled, he was determined, he said, to suffer no longer the ill-treatment of men without delicacy or virtue, who insolently pretended to make their will prevail against that of him *who had done them so much honor*.

CHAPTER IX.

Departure of Columbus for Europe. — Navigation distressing. — Danger and Vows during a Tempest. — Arrival at the Azores. — Perfidy of the Portuguese Governor. — A new Tempest. — Forced landing in Portugal.

SECTION I.

ON Friday, the eleventh of January, the Admiral put to sea, and while coasting along the island of Hispaniola, gave names to several capes and promontories.

Desiring to procure some fresh provisions, he sent a boat to the land, the crew of which encountered some men with bows and arrows, and with whom they entered into communication. The sailors induced one of these men to follow them to the caravel. He was a stout fellow, completely naked, and with his face daubed with black. His hair was long, tied behind, and decorated with birds' feathers. From his ferocious looks and hardy and undaunted manner, the Admiral took him for one of those Caribs (man-eaters), of whom he had heard. He asked him whether he was from Canniba; the warrior answered he was not, and pointed to the east as the country of that race. After having made useless inquiries, he had him served with victuals, gave him some trinkets, and dismissed him, inviting him to return with some gold, if he had any. As the boat approached the shore, some sixty warriors were seen lurking behind the trees. At the first words of their countryman, they concealed a part of their arms and came forth to meet the Spaniards. The latter bought of them two bows and a number of arrows; but after receiving the

price, in place of delivering the arms, and seeing they had to do with seven strangers, they ran to get their cords to bind them as captives. Perceiving their intention, the seven Spaniards immediately attacked them, wounding two of them and putting the rest to flight. The seven Spaniards would have made great carnage of them, had they not been restrained by the pilot who commanded the boat, complying with the orders he had received. Columbus was at first grieved at this occurrence: he desired that his expedition should not cost this people, whom he came to lead to the peace of the Lord, a single drop of blood. But, reflecting on the matter, he became consoled; for this defeat of sixty warriors by the seven strangers, ought to turn to the advantage of the little colony he left in the little fortress.

Before returning to Castile, Columbus desired to fall in with the Caribs, or people of Canniba, so much dreaded in the countries he had visited, and to see those cannibals, — those rebels against the order of Providence, who, outraging nature by a revolting appetite, went to steal men with the intention of eating them. This abomination appeared to him to be impossible; to believe it, he would require to see it. He had also heard of an island called “Matinino,” which was peopled only with armed women without men, and which reminded him of the fabulous Amazons. He was certain of the existence of that island; but the Indians being unable to point out the way to it, he thought he should find it east-south-eastwards. In this he was not mistaken. But a favorable wind springing up for returning to Spain, and seeing that his men were becoming gloomy on account of their prolonged absence from home, he determined to take the route to Europe, and that the more, because his ships had become leaky. To remain was no less dangerous than to depart. In that situation, and at that distance, he had no help to hope for but in God.

The man of Providence turned the prow towards Spain, in the name of the Blessed Trinity. “Because,” says the

venerable Las Casas, "notwithstanding the large leaking of the caravels, he trusted that our Lord, who had led him on by His bounty, would deign to lead him back by His mercy."

On the twelfth of February the wind blew violently, and in the evening there were three flashes of lightning in the north-east, which were considered as signs of an approaching storm. The Admiral immediately prepared for its coming. It soon burst on them with frightful violence. The horizon presented a terrific aspect. The sea, swollen and roaring, opened in yawning abysses, or raised to the skies its billows, lashed by the fury of the winds. The ribs of the *Niña* groaned beneath the shocks of the monstrous surges. The caravels became totally unmanageable. The *Pinta*, whose damaged masting prevented her from wrestling longer with the hurricane, went scudding before the wind. At night the Admiral had three lanterns, one above the other, put at the part of the mainmast where the royal standard was fixed, to give a sign to the *Pinta* to use no sail. In order to prevent the vessels from running foul of each other during the darkness of the night, he had a lantern raised as a signal, to which Martin Alonzo Pinzon responded, and which he continued to do until the violence of the hurricane made him disappear in the distance of the foaming valleys.

Far from lessening the horror of the tempest, the return of day only increased its fury. The Admiral had not quitted the deck; he personally directed the ship. The redoubled persistence of the storm had wonderfully intimidated the most fearless mariners. They all turned their eyes to the Admiral, and he turned his heart to God, the only resource in a peril so imminent. The man could do nothing longer, — the Christian alone remained, with his faith.

He proposed to the seamen that a vow should be made, and that they should determine by lot which of them should go on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Santa Maria of Guade-

loupe, bearing a wax taper of five pounds weight. By his orders, a number of dried beans, equal to the number of persons on board, were counted, on one of which the sign of the cross was marked with a knife; they were put into a cap and well shaken. All came to draw, each one according to his rank.

It was the Admiral's turn to begin; he put his hand into the cap and drew the bean marked with the cross. Soon afterwards, the danger becoming more imminent, another vow was determined upon. This time it was to make a pilgrimage to the chapel of Our Lady of Loretto, in the Pontifical States. The lot now fell on a sailor named Pedro Villa. As this man was evidently not in a way to pay the expenses of the journey, Columbus engaged to bear them himself. A little after, the storm becoming fiercer, a third vow was determined upon. It was to go to the church of Santa Clara, at Moguer, to have a mass celebrated, and watch all night in prayer before the high altar. Again it was the Admiral that drew the bean marked with the cross. Afterwards there was a joint vow made to go in procession, barefooted and in their shirts, to the nearest church of Our Lady, in the first land they should reach.

The despondency was extreme; each man gave himself up for lost. There was no doubt that the *Pinta* had foundered in the storm. Everybody recommended himself to God, or to his patron saint, but did not dare to hope for life. All believed themselves lost without resource; no human chance of safety remained. The danger of the caravel was augmented by the want of ballast, the Admiral not having been able to reach the "Isle of Women," where he proposed ballasting the *Niña*. The consumption of water and provisions had lightened her so, that she rolled and tossed at the mercy of the waves. The crew abandoned themselves to despair.

Columbus became a prey to the most distressing anxiety. His mind, more agitated than the tumultuous ocean, falling from confidence to doubt, and from fear to anguish, arose

and sank alternately, like the billows of the Atlantic. He says so himself: every splash of a wave troubled him. He attributed this weakness to his want of faith, and his not abandoning himself to Providence. On the one hand, when he called to mind the prodigious circumstances attending the Discovery, the favors God had bestowed on him, in according him a triumph so grand, showing him innumerable things of a marvellous character, causing him to discover a multitude of islands, as if He had willed that after so many contrarieties endured in Castile all his hopes should be more than realized, he became somewhat encouraged. When he examined into the depths of his heart, and there saw that his chief desire was for the greater glory of God, it seemed to him impossible that the Almighty, who had delivered him from so many perils in his first passage, when he had most to fear, and who had enabled him to overcome the terrors of dread and revolt, sustaining him "alone, against all," should now render fruitless all the miracles of His bounty in forsaking him in this extreme danger. On the other hand, seeing that the rigors of the heavens persisted, notwithstanding his prayers, and that total loss was imminent, he considered that God, on account of his sins, and in punishment for them, had certainly determined to take from him the satisfaction of being himself the bearer of the news of the Discovery to the Sovereigns, and to deprive him of the glory that would attach to his name.

To die without being able to make known the beauties that were revealed to his astonished gaze; to leave thus Christian nations in ignorance of the New World; and to leave these new peoples in ignorance of Christ, — was to him a grief as immense as was his thought. To die, when he had just touched the shore of gold, when he believed he held the deliverance of the Holy Places in his hands; to die with the triumph he had gained for truth, — that cosmographic victory the most important for mankind, — was to suffer anguish of soul, of heart and of mind: it was

to die thrice in expiring but once. If he had been alone in danger, he would have borne, he says, his misfortune with more resignation; he had so often seen death staring him, that he would no more have feared it than he did on other occasions. What increased his sorrow was the thought of his being the cause of the loss of so many persons who had followed him,—the greater part unwillingly,—and who in their extreme despair cursed him, accusing him of having brought them to ruin. He thought also of his two sons, who were making their studies at Cordova, and who were going to become orphans in a strange land, where they would find themselves without support; for the Sovereigns, ignorant of the services rendered them by their father, would no longer think of the poor children.

In the midst of the lamentations of the crew, of the lashings of the breakers, and of the creakings of the half-submerged *Niña*, Columbus entered into his cabin. There, with a hand as rapid as it was firm, notwithstanding the fearful rolling of the vessel, he traced in haste, on a parchment, a brief account of his discoveries. He enclosed it in another leaf, in which he besought the person who should read the lines to take them to the Queen of Castile, promising a recompense of a thousand ducats. He wrapped this packet in a wax cloth, sealed with his signet, then put it in a cake of beeswax, and putting the whole into an empty barrel, threw them into the sea. The crew saw in this offering made to the waves, only the accomplishment of some secret vow. Lest the currents should bear away, far from Europe, this message of a forlorn hope, he took a copy of it, and this he enclosed in a similar manner, in another barrel, which he attached to the poop, so that should the *Niña* be swallowed up by the waves, the barrel might float off, and be found some day in the future.

SECTION II.

On Friday, the fifteenth of February, land was discerned in the east. The sight of it reanimated the minds of the crew, but a strong wind blew from that quarter. The pilots thought they were at the coast of Castile, but Columbus concluded it was one of the Azores. Still, the roughness of the sea, although diminished, did not permit them to approach the land. They passed the whole day, the night, and the next day in trying to reach it, but in vain. The night of the seventeenth of February, Columbus, — who, notwithstanding an attack of gout, remained since the commencement of the storm until then, that is to say, four days and nights, exposed to the rains, the winds, and the drenching surges, without a moment's repose, and almost without food, — finding himself motionless in his limbs, was obliged to take a little rest. But at dawn he resumed the command, steered south-south-east, and at last arrived near an island which the obscurity of the night prevented from being clearly discerned. At length, on Monday, he succeeded in reaching land. They had arrived at Santa Maria, the most southern of the Azores, and a possession of the Crown of Portugal.

The inhabitants were at first astonished that such a frail vessel, in the state she was in, could have borne against so long and furious a tempest. But they were astonished still more when they learned whence the little caravel had arrived. At the news of the Discovery of the Indies, they gave glory to God, and manifested the greatest joy.

Towards evening, three men came to the shore, hailing the *Niña*; and, a boat being sent for them, they brought the Admiral fowls, fresh bread, and various refreshments, from the governor of the island, who would, they said, the next day pay him a visit, and bring further refreshments, together with the three sailors, whom he still kept with him, to satisfy his extreme curiosity respecting the voyage.



As it was late in the day, Columbus had the messengers to remain on board all night.

Early the next morning, the Admiral, unwilling to defer the fulfilment of the vow made by the crew, of going barefooted, and in their shirts, to the church of Our Lady in the first land they should tread on, requested the three messengers, who returned to the town, to send a priest to the hermitage of Our Lady, situated near the sea, behind a cape. Half of the crew went in procession to the chapel. While the Spaniards were engaged in their devotions, the garrison of the island surrounded the chapel, and made the poor pilgrims prisoners.

The Admiral awaited the return of the boat, to go with the other half of the men to the hermitage. At eleven o'clock, seeing that nothing appeared, he suspected his sailors were retained prisoners, or that the boat had been shattered on the surf-beaten rocks. The chapel could not be seen from the caravel; he therefore weighed anchor, and stood in a direction to command a view of it. Soon there was seen a troop of armed horsemen, who, dismounting, entered the boat and made for the caravel, as if determined to capture her. When they were within speaking distance of each other, the governor of the island, who commanded the detachment in person, demanded a safe-conduct for his personal safety, in case he should go on board the caravel. This the Admiral granted; but the astute Portuguese still remained at a wary distance.

The Admiral demanded of him why, contrary to the laws of hospitality, and in violation of the rights of man, he had retained his men at a time when the Portuguese who were in Castile were in as great security as if they were in Lisbon. He added, that the King and Queen, of whom he was Grand Admiral of the Ocean, had ordered him to treat with distinction the Portuguese vessels he may meet with. He assured him that if he did not return his men he would not only continue his way with the others, but would also chastise so odious a perfidy.

The governor answered, with an arrogant tone, that here they were not disquieted about the King or the Queen of Castile, nor about their letters; and that he would let him see that he had to do with Portugal. When he had exhausted all his braggadocio, he told the Admiral that, if he pleased, he might return to the port with the caravel, and that, for his own part, acting, as he was, conformably to the orders of the King, his sovereign, he felt quite easy about the result.

The Admiral could use only threatenings against such treachery. After making preparations for any troublesome eventualities that may arise, he again stood out to sea, where, for two days and nights, he was mercilessly buffeted by another violent storm.

On Friday, the twenty-second of February, Columbus, by a sudden resolution or impulse, having returned to that port which he thought he had abandoned, soon saw a man hoisting his mantle, as a sign to have him taken on board the *Niña*. Some time after, the boat, bringing two priests and a notary, came to the caravel. They demanded an assurance of safety, before going on board. The Admiral having accorded it, they came on board, and requested a sight of his papers, to see that he was really attached to the service of the Catholic Sovereigns. Columbus consented to show them his letters-patent, and gave them some of the things he brought from the New World. The delegates of the governor appeared to be sufficiently satisfied with his character, and sent him back, with the boat, all the men of the crew that had been so treacherously detained. He learned from his men that if the governor succeeded in getting hold of his person he never would be restored to liberty: for such were the peremptory orders of King John II.

SECTION III.

The third of March, at sunset, the *Niña* was struck by a squall of wind, which rent all her sails, so that she was on the point of foundering; but Providence cast a favorable look on his servant. In the height of the danger, new prayers and a new vow were resorted to. Lots were drawn, to know which of the seamen should go, in his shirt, barefooted, to the shrine of Santa Maria de la Cinta, in the province of Huelva; and, as usual, the lot fell on Columbus. "Which led him to judge," says Las Casas, "that God was always with him; but willed that he should humble himself, and not become proud on account of the favors already accorded him."

Each of the men, also, made a vow to fast on bread and water the first Saturday that would follow the arrival of the caravel. Still the storm only increased in its fury. In the evening, the turbulence of the elements still increased. The rain, at times, fell in torrents, and lightnings flashed and thunder pealed from various parts of the heavens. The sea was broken, wild, and mountainous. At one moment the caravel was high in the air, and the next moment seemed sinking in a yawning abyss. The aspect of things was terrible in the highest degree, and no human power could have overcome the danger. "But it pleased our Lord to come to the aid of the Admiral, and to show him land," says Las Casas. It was seen towards midnight; but the obscurity of the night prevented him from recognizing where they were.

At daybreak, on the fourth of March, they found themselves near the rock of Cintra, at the mouth of the Tagus. At the sight of the imminent danger the caravel was in of being shipwrecked, the inhabitants of the town of Cascaes, situated at the mouth of the Tagus, flocked to the church. They lighted wax tapers, and said prayers, during the whole morning, for the souls of the poor sailors of the little car-

avel, which seemed already the prey of the merciless waves ; and when, with the assistance of God, Columbus entered into the stream, the whole population ran to the shore, esteeming it a miracle that they had been saved from a death that appeared inevitable.

CHAPTER X.

Honors rendered to Columbus by the People and the Court. — The Council of State proposes to assassinate him. — The King Honors and protects him. — The Queen desires to see him.

SECTION I.

BY skilful manœuvring, about three o'clock in the afternoon, Columbus reached the landing at Rastello. He there cast anchor, thanking the Author of Life for having delivered him from so imminent a danger.

Immediately on his arrival, he despatched a messenger to Castile, to inform the Sovereigns of his arrival. He wrote also to the King of Portugal, who was then at Valparaiso, requesting permission to go with his vessel to Lisbon, not thinking he was secure in a place like Rastello, which was frequented by a population capable of seizing on his caravel, which was believed to be laden with gold, because she returned from the Indies, which he had discovered. Anticipating the susceptibilities of John II., he cleverly insinuated that he had not been to the coast of Guinea, but to the extremity of Asia, by sailing to the west.

Next, he wrote, without delay, to the noble Luiz de Santangel, — the man who, of all others, was most influential in fixing the resolution of Queen Isabella, — mentioning the success of his voyage, and his then embarrassed situation. Immediately after, he addressed an account of his voyage to the treasurer, Raphael Sanchez, which was soon afterwards published in Rome. His letter to Sanchez concludes thus: —

“Although all that I have mentioned seems extraordinary

and unheard of, there would have been grander results if I had at my disposal a sufficient number of ships as the case required. It is not to any merit of mine that this grand and vast enterprise is due; it is due to the holy Catholic faith, and to the piety and the religion of the monarchs; for the Lord has accorded to men what human intelligence could neither conceive nor attain; because God sometimes hears the prayers of His servants who obey His precepts, even in the things that appear impossible. Such is what has happened to me, who have succeeded in an enterprise which, until the present time, no mortal dared to devise; for although the existence of these islands had been already spoken of and written about, yet all spoke and wrote of them by mere conjecture, and under the form of doubt; but nobody asserted his having seen them, so that they were considered fabulous. Then, let the King, the Queen, and the princes, with their very happy kingdoms, in concert with the Christian world, render thanks to our Lord Jesus Christ, who has accorded us such a victory, and such a grand success! Let there be processions; let solemn feasts be celebrated; let the temples be embellished with boughs and flowers; let Jesus Christ exult with joy on earth, as He rejoices in heaven, at the approaching salvation of so many peoples, until the present in the region of the shadow of death. Let us rejoice, as well because of the exaltation of our Faith, as because of the increase of temporal goods, the fruit of which will be gathered not only by Spain, but by the whole Christian world." *

The tidings of the discovery of a new world by a ship anchored in the Tagus soon reached Lisbon. Notwithstanding the unfavorable state of the weather, a crowd flocked to the anchorage at Rastello; a large number of barks swarmed around the caravel. Admiration was no

* *Epistola Cristoferi Colomb.*, ad magnificum dom. RAPHAELEM SANXIS, etc., ab Hispanio ydeomate in latinum convertit. *Roma*, 1493.

less excited than curiosity. Heartfelt thanks were rendered to God for this event, which a confused intuition, a secret presentiment, considered immense. The voice of the people declared that this glory was given to Castile in recompense for the zeal of her Sovereigns in the cause of religion.

SECTION II.

On Friday, the eighth of March, a message from the King of Portugal came to give sanction to the spontaneous manifestations of homage rendered to the man of Providence. The chief of the nation followed the transports of exultation presented by his people. He graciously requested the Admiral, as the bad weather detained him at the anchorage, to be pleased to visit him at his retreat, and ordered his officers to furnish him, without cost, everything he needed for himself, his men, or his ship. He ordered the principal officers of his household to go to meet him, and had a princely entertainment prepared for him at Sacamben, where he was to sleep. The Admiral started on his journey, accompanied by one of his pilots, who was to perform the functions of *aid-de-camp*. The continuance of the rain did not permit him to reach Valparaiso until the evening following. He made his entry, accompanied by a splendid retinue.

The reception the King gave him surpassed all the honors he had yet received. John II. received him as he would a prince of the blood,—had him seated and covered in his presence, showed him a high consideration; spoke to him with the greatest affability, and testified his satisfaction at the success of the enterprise; adding, that he felt the greater joy, because, according to the treaty concluded with Castile in 1479, the discovery of these new countries, and their conquest, pertained to him of right. The Admiral answered that, not having read the treaty referred to, he knew nothing of its nature; only he knew that in the instructions he received it was prescribed to him not to go to La Mina, nor

to the coast of Guinea, and that this order was published in all the seaports of Andalusia, before the voyage was commenced. The King made a gracious reply, saying that these matters would be adjusted between the two Sovereigns and himself, without the intervention of any umpire.

Afterwards the monarch confided his guest to the attentions of the highest personage of his court.

On Sunday morning, after mass, the King recommenced his conversation with Columbus, and asked about the particulars of the voyage. He asked many more questions than he did the day before, and took occasion to show that he was an admirer of cosmography. And, as in satisfying his curiosity he recognized the grandeur of the enterprise, he felt a secret vexation for permitting the slipping from his hands of those marvellous regions which were once offered to him by Columbus, before they were proposed to Castile. He had some doubts in regard to the distances and the route followed. It seemed to him that there must have been an infringement on the rights of Portugal, guaranteed to her by the Papal Bull, accorded to the infant Don Henry. Immediately after the audience, he summoned his Council to deliberate on the matter.

While Columbus, as was his wont, was passing the hours of Sunday in prayer and meditation, not many paces from him, in the hall of the Council, the project was discussed of robbing him of his discoveries, and of putting him to death.

His assassination was proposed to the King; but the latter, fearing God, repulsed the perfidious suggestion.

On Monday, Columbus took leave of the King. The monarch loaded him with marks of esteem and distinction. By his orders, Don Martin de Noroña conducted him back, surrounded with all the lords of the court, who went with him a considerable distance, to do him the greater honor.

On the pressing invitation of the Queen, the Admiral went to the monastery of San Antonio, where she was with the first ladies of her court. She showed him the greatest kindness, manifested the highest regard for him, and was pleased

to question him about that new world which he wished to bring under the law of the Gospel. She could not get tired of listening to him; and detained him so long, that it was night before he could get to his lodging-place at Llandra.

Being on the point of departing in the morning, a squire of the King's came to offer him, on the part of his master, to accompany him to the frontier, if he preferred going by land to Castile; having orders to furnish him, at the cost of the Crown, with lodgings, horses, and everything he may need. The weather having moderated, he preferred returning to Castile by sea.

CHAPTER XI.

Arrival of Columbus at Palos. — His Reunion with the Father Superior of La Rabida; his Stay at the Convent. — His Departure for the Court. — His triumphal Reception at Barcelona. — Action of the Holy See in Relation to Columbus. — The Story of the Egg.

SECTION I.

A FEELING of vague inquietude weighed heavily at that time on the little city of Palos. In every family there was deep anxiety about a relation or a friend. For seven months and twelve days (for days were counted), they were without news of those sons of the country whom an order of the Sovereigns had forced to follow that grand schemer, the Genoese, — a schemer whom more than one mother and one wife had cursed in their waking hours. What had become of those men? They were believed to be hopelessly lost, — engulfed in the abysses of the TENEBOUS SEA, — and nobody dared to utter the frightful kind of death met with by those unfortunate beings, sacrificed to the ambition of a foreign visionary.

Such was the state of feeling when, on Friday, the fifteenth of March, at noon, the loungers about the port perceived a caravel, which, by a light breeze, stood up the Odiel, and soon they recognized in her the *Niña*. Transports of joy immediately broke forth throughout the whole community.

By a spontaneous movement, all the shops were shut, and the people flocked to the caravel. The bells rung peals, cannon were fired, and the windows were graced with

drapery. "Columbus, in coming ashore, was received with the same honors as if he had been a king. The whole people accompanied him and his men, in a solemn procession, to the church, where they came to thank God for having crowned with so happy a success a voyage the longest and the most important that had ever been undertaken." * After so much anxiety and alarm, what must not have been the exhilarating joy of those families, in receiving into their arms the dear ones they despaired of ever again seeing here below !

Some hours later, while the whole city, transported with an unspeakable gladness, were offering their felicitations and homages to the Admiral, and, by the pealing of their bells, announcing to the neighboring towns that an uncommon event had occurred, another caravel was seen to come near the anchorage of the *Niña* ; it was the *Pinta*, which was commanded by Martin Alonzo Pinzon. After a short time, a yawl from the latter stealthily descended the river : it was the captain, who was making his exit.

Driven by the tempest into the Bay of Biscay, Martin Alonzo Pinzon, persuaded that the poor little *Niña* was lost, addressed to the Sovereigns an account of the Discovery, — which he feigned to have made himself, — and requested permission to go to the Court, to give the particulars of the expedition. While awaiting their answer he came to his native city, expecting a triumphant reception ; but when he beheld the vessel of the Admiral riding at anchor, his heart died within him. Fearing that his chief would have him arrested and put in irons, as was his due, he shamefully got out of the way, with his heart filled with rage at the noise of the triumph of him whom he hoped to have supplanted.

The crew of the *Pinta* remained entire ; and among the men left at Hispaniola, none of them was a native of Palos. Columbus could, without exaggeration, have addressed to

* Robertson. *History of America*, Vol. I., Book II.

the people of this port, who had detested and cursed him, these words of the Good Shepherd: "Of them whom thou hast given me, I have not lost one."* So the joy of the inhabitants was unbounded. Seeing that the Admiral brought back all those confided to his care, they were unable to give expression to the transports of their admiration for him.

Witnesses of the reception given by their families to the sailors of Palos, the other seamen, natives of places in its vicinity, wishing for a like happiness, were desirous of going the same evening to their own dwellings. But the ovations and the enthusiasm of which he was the object could not, for a moment, efface from the soul of Columbus, so tenderly pious, the resolution formed during the storm off the coast of the Azores. The Admiral would not grant a discharge to any of them, before the accomplishment of the vow which the perfidy of the Portuguese governor of Santa Maria had sacrilegiously interrupted. They had promised to go to the first church dedicated to Our Lady, near the place where the *Niña* would land. The place was now Palos, and the church,—Our Lady of La Rabida,—at the convent of which the learned Juan Perez de Marchena was Superior.

Thus the generous Franciscan, who celebrated the solemn mass for the departure of the expedition, celebrated the mass of thanksgiving for its return. Providence seemed to have reserved that satisfaction for him. In the evening, solemn thanks were rendered to God for the favor of the Discovery. The next day they went to thank the Blessed Virgin, the anchor and the hope of the poor mariner. It was a profoundly touching ceremony. All the seamen, barefooted, and in their shirts, from the cabin-boy even to the Admiral, in the piteous garb of shipwrecked mariners, saved from the billows, coming to give thanks to Mary, the Star of the Sea, for having delivered them from the abysses

* *Quia quos dedisti mihi, non perdidisti ex eis quem quam.* S. Joan. Evang. xviii.

of the wrathful ocean, were followed by a crowd who, with their whole hearts, joined in their prayers and in their acts of thanksgiving.

Every sailor now found himself the object of particular attention; he was listened to as an oracle, and his family became proud of him. But the Admiral saw that he himself was a stranger at Palos, and that he had no relations there. His family was that of St. Francis; his brothers of the Seraphic Order awaited him at La Rabida; so he returned to them, and again took possession of the dear cell reserved for him by the Father Superior.

We may easily conceive the happiness of these two friends in finding themselves together again. That great thought which they both had, at first, separately,—that hope which was common to them both, and that patient faith which knew how to triumph over the pride and the prejudices of science,—were, at last, crowned with success. Father Juan Perez de Marchena was not deceived, then! Beyond that blue line of the west, which his looks so often interrogated, there existed, as he had anticipated, habitable lands, and peoples to be led to the Saviour. The sign of Redemption was shown to the natives; the Cross was planted among them, and saluted by the simple children of the forests. Now could the wish of the seraphic Francis Assisium be accomplished. The tranquil joy, the evangelical satisfaction, and the heartfelt consolation experienced by the little community of La Rabida, cannot be expressed.

If ever, in any diplomatic congress, there was submitted for consideration a project of more importance than the one whose bases were, seven years before that, examined by Columbus and the learned Franciscan in this humble monastery, we may safely assert that never was there a more wonderful scientific calculation than that which, on the morrow of his arrival, he prepared for the advantage of Castile. For the interests of the Spanish monarchs, the sketch he thus traced hastily, in the silence of the cloister,

was, perhaps, of more immense and of more immediate benefit than the Discovery.

From his cell he counselled the two Sovereigns to do homage to the Holy See for the lands newly discovered, and to entreat its benediction on the enterprise by a Bull that would protect their acquisitions.

From his cell he also indicated how, to avoid ulterior conflicts, the lands discovered should be apportioned by the two maritime powers who then maintained exploring expeditions in the ocean.

For this purpose, Columbus conceived the idea of inducing the Sovereign Pontiff to assign to the discoveries of the Castilians in the West an equal space to that which the Portuguese would have in the East; and, in order to determine the frontiers of the two kingdoms in the illimitable plains of the ocean, he proposed a means that was of a superhuman simplicity.

So, full of confidence as if he held the whole space of the globe beneath his eyes, although two-thirds of it were as yet unknown, with a sublime boldness, or, rather, an angelic quietness, he makes the section of the equator, which nobody had yet traversed, traces across immensity a vast demarcation, draws from one pole to the other an ideal line which will divide the earth, in passing at a main distance of a hundred leagues to the west of the islands of Cape Verd and those of the Azores. To accomplish this astonishing geographical division, he chose precisely the only point of our planet which science would choose in our day: the singular region of the line without magnetic declination, where the transparency of the waters, the balminess of the air, the clearness of the atmosphere, the abundance of the submarine vegetation, the tropical resplendency of the nights, and the phosphorescence of the waves, indicated, in the unsteady empire of the billows, a mysterious demarcation made by the omnipotent Creator.

This vast calculation was the boldest conception that ever issued from the human intellect. Still, Columbus, without

being astonished, without hesitating, without, perhaps, being aware of the vastness of his operation, calmly takes his calculations of demarcation, and simply demands that they be sent to Rome.

Assuredly, all that he advanced in these considerations for the partition of unexplored regions between the Crowns of Castile and of Portugal was as rational as it was bold, and as bold as it was unknown to the rest of mankind; because the obstacles which new undertakings are always sure to encounter must produce objections, doubts, and, ultimately, resistance. But the messenger of Salvation had faith in the infallible wisdom of the Church, the depository of the truths of the Word. We will hereafter see how the Holy See justified this generous confidence reposed in it.

SECTION II.

All the persons who returned with Columbus could take some recreation after their fatigues, and enjoy the charms of repose after so many toils and dangers. As to him,—whom the lot, in three cases out of four, had designated for the expiation of the sins of all,—he must fulfil the vows with which a mysterious predilection had charged him.

He first went to the church of Our Lady of Guadalupe, bearing a lighted wax taper of five pounds' weight. In this retreat he experienced great spiritual consolations, conversed with holy men, and formed friendships with them that were lasting. He promised the religious of the convent that, in consequence of their kindness to him, he would give the name of their monastery to one of the islands he would discover,—and he kept his word.

Afterwards, Columbus returned to Moguer, near Palos, to the Convent of St. Clair, to which he was affiliated by the cord of St. Francis, which he wore beneath his clothes. There a solemn mass of thanksgiving was celebrated. When evening came, he entered, alone, the chapel, the doors of which were shut on him. There he was to

spend the night in prayer. The glimmering light of the lamp of the sanctuary was reflected on pictures and bas-reliefs, and showed confusedly the warrior effigies of the counts of Puerto Carrero, former lords of the place,—those valiant knights of the Cross who acquired such celebrity in the wars against the Moors. With an hereditary fidelity, their lineage had, for ages, combated bravely against the Crescent. The blood of the house of Puerto Carrero is allied, as is known, with that of the ancestors of the Countess of Teba, the Empress Eugenie. The counts of Puerto Carrero slept their sleep in this church, of which they were benefactors. The alabaster statues of their wives and daughters, placed in lines along the walls, showed the places of their sepulture. It was amid these funereal images of the nothingness of human pomp, that the messenger of the Most High, prostrate before the tabernacle, and in the presence of Christ living in the Holy Eucharist, examined, anew, his heart. The next day, after having discharged this duty, he saw his old friend the Abbé Sanchez de Cabezudo, who invited him to come to see him at Palos, and to whom he showed the Indians and the gold he had brought from the New World.

The religious obligations of Columbus were not yet entirely discharged. He had still to go to the shrine of Our Lady of the Cinture, in the same province of Huelva. It is well known that he went there barefooted, and in his shirt, according to the tenor of his vow.

After having acquitted himself, as far as he could, of the obligations to which he had bound himself by vow, Columbus returned to the convent of his Order, to meet again his friend and spiritual guide, Father Juan Perez de Marchena. For more than seven months he had been deprived of the sacred aliment of the faith,—the bread of the strong. He felt the need of reviving his soul, of refreshing himself with the salutary calm of the Rule, and of enjoying the restorative repose of the cloister. In the bosom of this friend, he deposited secrets which nobody else knew,—

what he had endured from men ; what he had received from God ; his individual conjectures, which he would not confide to paper ; his cosmographical doubts ; his indefinite apperceptions, sketched in his mind ; the bold corollaries of his intuition, — all were poured into the vast heart that was covered by the coarse habit of St. Francis. The mutual outpourings to each other of these two minds, so ardently smitten with the beautiful and the imperishable, and the free communication of these two souls mutually reflecting each other, simple in their faith and sublime in their intuitions, — how fruitful must they not have been in superior apperceptions and aspirations to the divine Word our Redeemer, from whom all the love and all the charity among us are derived !

The Admiral was unable to remain at La Rabida more than seven days. He had to go to Seville, to await there the orders of the Sovereigns, and arrived in that city only a short time before receiving the despatch of the Court, which was addressed to him with this significant superscription : “TO DON CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, OUR ADMIRAL OF THE OCEAN, VICEROY AND GOVERNOR OF THE ISLANDS DISCOVERED IN THE INDIES.”

The letter containing the felicitations for his happy voyage, authorized him to make the necessary arrangements for a new expedition on a more becoming scale, and invited him to come to Barcelona as soon as possible.

By return of the courier, Columbus sent the Sovereigns a memorandum of the munitions requisite for the new expedition ; and, having made at Seville such arrangements as circumstances permitted, he set out with the seven Indians who had escaped from the dangers of the voyage, taking with him the curiosities and productions brought from the New World.

SECTION III.

In the mean time, with the rapidity of an electric telegraph, fame had already spread, to the very outskirts of Spain, the news of the wonderful event that had been celebrated at Palos, at Seville, and at Barcelona. The report of the Discovery went on increasing from hour to hour; and, as the way of Columbus to the Court led him through the most flourishing and populous provinces, an immense concourse of people awaited, everywhere, his arrival. "His whole journey was, for him, a continued triumph. The great thoroughfares and the country places resounded with the acclamations of the people, who quitted everything in order to see him. They went out in crowds to meet him in all the cities through which he was to pass." *

The cortege, less pompous than it was strange, was opened by some mariners of the *Nina* under arms, escorting the royal standard, borne by a pilot. Then came the sailors, some with branches of unknown trees and shrubs, enormous calabashes, gigantic reeds, and arborescent ferns; others, with raw cotton, pimento, cocoas, and ginger; and others, again, with crowns of gold, bracelets, cinctures, masks of gold, superb conches, spears, iron-wood swords, and bows and arrows without steel. Next were seen unknown vegetables, and animals, some of which were living, others stuffed; large lizards, serpents with brilliant scales, alligators, and other strange animals. After these came the seven Indians, decked in their national ornaments, and carefully painted in white and red. They preceded the little states-major of the expedition. At last came the Admiral, in the costume of his dignities, mounted on a charger, which he managed with skill and ease. After him came his three squires, who were engaged in keeping the ardent crowd from pressing on him. Every moment the Indians, astonished and scared at the curiosity they excited, would

* Charlevoix. *Hist. de San Domingo*, Book II., p. 107.

look to their protector, the Admiral, and his smile would immediately dispel their uneasiness.

History has proved it: it was not especially to see the Indians, and the wonderful things exposed to view in the cortege, that caused this great concourse of people, — a nobler curiosity prompted it. Everybody wished to gaze on the Admiral, and imprint on their memories the image of the man favored by Heaven, who had crossed the GLOOMY OCEAN, and enlarged the known boundaries of the earth. All limbs were in motion and all heads uncovered at his approach; it was an immense salutation. The Christian hero, sweetly moved by these demonstrations, referred this triumph to God alone. Still, this incomparable eagerness to behold him was a confirmation, to him, of the grandeur of the work for which Providence had deigned to choose him.

In their enthusiasm, the people, having preceded, by this ovation, the orders of the Sovereigns, the punctilious etiquette of the Court had to yield to an eagerness that was unanimous. So, to gratify the public, as much as to remunerate with an honor without parallel a service without equal, the Sovereigns prepared for the Admiral a reception until then unheard of.

The fifteenth of April, the day Columbus was to enter Barcelona, a large portion of the inhabitants went out to meet him; the *elite* of the young courtiers preceded him on horseback, and a deputation from the Court awaited him at the gates of the city. As if to increase the solemnity, the day was delightful. In the palace of the Sovereigns, by a new contrivance, the vast hall was enlarged, rendered accessible to the view, and splendidly decorated. Beneath a magnificent canopy of gold brocade were two thrones, a settee covered with velvet fringed with gold, and, a little in advance, a richly-decorated armed chair.

Some moments before his arrival, the King and Queen, wearing their crowns, and invested with all the marks of

sovereignty, entered, and sat on their respective thrones. The Prince Royal sat on the settee. The armed chair remained unoccupied.

The high officers of the two royal households, the ministers and the Counsellors of State, were ranged to the right and left, a little behind the thrones. The dignitaries of Arragon on the one side, those of Castile on the other, and, further on, the employés of the two civil houses, the knights, the squires, the pages, each according to his rank and order of precedence. In the reserved hall were seated the ladies of the palace, the prelates, men of wealth, and the nobility; outside the balustrade were the contractors of the two Crowns, and the happy burgesses, who were protected by some friends of the Crown.

Outside there was heard an indescribable sound. The narrow streets of Barcelona were thronged with multitudes impatient to see him. At all the balconies, graced with garlands of flowers, tapestry, and ladies, were waved bouquets, fans, and mantillas. From every terrace, and even from the roofs of houses, covered with spectators, there went forth accents replete with gladness.

The vociferations of the crowd, and the return of the lords sent to the gates of the city, announced the arrival of the cortege. Soon there was seen entering, surrounded by the officers of the expedition, the royal standard so happily brought back from the further coast of the *TENEBOUS SEA*. People wondered at these sunburnt men, who had followed him through so many perils. Curiosity gazed at the strange objects brought from the New World, — the vegetable productions; the animals, living and preserved; and especially the timid Indians.

At length Columbus came, as simple and as modest in the magnificence of his costume as he was when he once departed from the walls of Santa Fé. It was the modesty which ignores self, and the simplicity which is produced by natural greatness. But his heart overflowed with a holy joy, and his face shone with a sublime serenity.

At his entrance the two Sovereigns arose from their thrones,* and, advancing to meet him, graciously tendered him their hands. Always submissive to authority, in token of homage he was about bending the knee, and kissing the royal hands, according to the etiquette of Castile; but Isabella and Ferdinand would not permit it. The Queen, somewhat confused at his deference, requested him to be seated near her, in the armed chair prepared for him. "Don Christopher Columbus," said the Queen, "be covered in the presence of your Sovereigns; sit by them. Be seated, Admiral of the Ocean and Viceroy of the New World."† Her eyes beaming with joy, with kindness, and with admiration, the Queen would not take her seat until after Columbus, according to her orders, became covered as a grandee of Spain, and seated in the armed chair. When they had obligingly complimented him, they requested him to give an account of the Discovery.

Conformably to the request made, he, the Discoverer of the New World, casting a serene look around him, as if taking the whole audience as witnesses of the truth of his words, after having declared that the true character of the expedition from which he had returned was Christian prior to every consideration, and that it was scientific and politic only in a secondary degree, said the favors God had pleased to vouchsafe to Spain, by his enterprise, appeared to be the recompense of the piety and zeal of the monarchs; that the broad ocean, until then interdicted to the curiosity of mortals, had henceforth become open to the fleets of Spain; and that the glorious flag of Castile was borne into the hemisphere of the antipodes, to lands without number, now visited by the Cross. He afterwards gave a brief and clear recital of his voyage, from the time of his departure from the Fortunate Islands until the time he quitted those nameless regions of which, by the grace of God, he was the discoverer.

* *Muñoz*, *Historia del Neuvo Mundo*, t. i., lib. iv.

† *Amedee de Pastoret*. *Histoire des Decouvertes*, MS., p. 96.

With the genius for classification and order which was peculiar to him, he commenced with describing the soil, and the geological and mineralogical aspect of the lands discovered; the most remarkable vegetable productions, and the different kinds of animals, aquatic as well as terrestrial, he had observed.

In illustration of this general exposition of the products of the New World, the Demonstrator of the Creation took the specimens he had brought with him, and, one by one, according to the class they pertained to, he placed them before the eyes of the august assemblage:

Different kinds of amber, colored earths proper for painting, various minerals, precious stones, gold, in dust and in grains, pure and wrought.

Passing to the vegetable kingdom, he showed gums, resins, medicinal plants, aromatic plants, spices, dyewoods, raw cotton, maize, sweet potatoes, tapioca, calamus, and that feculent tubercle become the food of the poor, and which we call the Irish potato.

Afterwards, to show more strikingly the difference of the products of the newly-discovered countries compared to their congeners in the Old World, he exhibited strange animals, — some terrestrial, others amphibious, these scaled, those stuffed, and others yet living.

As soon as he had terminated this poetic review of the three kingdoms of nature, approaching, at last, the history of man, — who is their crowned monarch, — he called attention to the seven native Indians present: mentioned the characteristic differences of their race; described their social condition, the simplicity of their manners; their religious belief, confused and limited, but which seemed exempt from idolatrous superstitions, and which, therefore, predisposed them to receive with more fruit the Gospel of Christ.

The gleaming looks of Columbus, the dignity of his bearing, the poetry of his images, the boldness of his language, and the authority of his gestures, adding a lustre to the nov-

elity of his views, equalled the majesty of the subject treated of, and kept the attention of the audience spell-bound. His expanded soul, penetrated with the wonders of creation, was in harmony with the spirit of that age, and the particular sentiments of that warlike Court which, the preceding year, had erected the Cross on the towers of Islamism. The assembly listened with breathless attention, and the deepest interest, to that lesson of descriptive geography, and of comparative natural history, which Columbus thus gave with illustrations. Nobody felt tired or fatigued during this exhibition of the wonders of the New World.

The enterprise of the Discovery was undertaken especially with a view to the glory of God and the propagation of Christianity, in order that the name of Jesus Christ may be glorified to the utmost extremities of the earth. And as, in terminating his discourse, the revealer of the globe declared that an innumerable multitude of souls, until then living in darkness, would soon enter into the pale of the Church, and, thanks to the piety of the two Sovereigns, would participate in the Redemption,—and as the accents of his ardent faith, of his tender charity, caused this consoling hope to enter the hearts of the audience,—the raptures and ardor that followed coming to their height, an indescribable emotion, mingled with tenderness and admiration, seized on the listeners. There was an outburst of enthusiasm. Suddenly, by an irresistible impulse, the King, the Queen, the whole Court, the people, throwing themselves on their knees, raised their hands to heaven, praising God, and shedding, with Columbus, tears of joy. At the same time was heard the hymn of victory,—the *Te Deum*,—intoned by the choristers of the royal chapel. The great voice of the people responded, and went on prolonging itself outside, throughout the city, in the midst of such delights, that Christian souls, according to the venerable Bishop of Chiapa, enjoyed a foretaste of the joys of Paradise.

Immediately after, Columbus, yet beaming with sublime sentiments, and moved with the enthusiasm his presence excited, surrounded with an areola of marks of respect, bowing, took his leave of the King and Queen, and went to the lodgings they had prepared for him. The lords of the Court accompanied him to the gate, surrounded with a crowd who could never become weary of gazing at and cheering the great man, — the visible minister of Providence.

SECTION IV.

The rumor of the Discovery, — the greatest and the most important event for science and for humanity that had ever occurred, — spread along the shores of Europe, reached the central parts, and soon extended to the East. The celebrated Sebastian Cabot, who was then at the Court of England, acknowledges that the Discovery was there considered rather a divine than a human work,* and the great navigator himself considered it so.

But it was especially in the capital of the Christian world that this news excited the most profound sensation.

The Court of Rome became elated with joy. The Sovereign Pontiff manifested publicly his gladness, and solemnly thanked God for having permitted those nations yet sitting in the shadows of death, to see the dawn of salvation. The distinguished strangers who were in the city, and the ambassadors who came there from all the Catholic countries to salute the chair of St. Peter, participated in this happiness.

Like the Sacred College, the learned world was in ecstasies at the Discovery. The scholars and the cosmographers of the papal library expected important results from it, and looked upon it as the beginning of other discoveries. The great master of classic literature, Pomponius Lætus, shed

* Hackluyt, *Collection de Voyages*, p. 7.

tears of joy on hearing of the wonder. Henceforward were the heroes of primitive times, the demi-gods of paganism, and the fabulous or historical expeditions of antiquity, eclipsed. Reality had come to efface mythology, and to surpass even imagination itself.

The sign of Redemption had been carried across the redoubtable Tenebrous Ocean, — the MARE TENEBROSUM, — beyond the dubious Atlantis, by a man whose name, singularly symbolic of salvation, recalled to mind the dove, — the emblem of the Holy Ghost, — and signified Christ-bearer, *Christophorus*. And this hero was a model of a Christian. His object cannot be called in question; for, from the twenty-fifth of April, and, consequently, ten days after his ovation at Barcelona, already a copy of his letter to Raphael Sanchez, sent to Rome, was there translated into Latin by Aliander de Cosco, and, with the pontifical authorization, printed by Eucharius Argentinus. Nine days later, the Holy Father attested, with his own hand, the sublimity of the mandate confided by Providence to his “well-beloved son” Christopher Columbus.

After this solemn attestation of his Discovery, Columbus could have died satisfied. Although he had, as yet, met with only islands, — the advanced sentinels of a continent completely unknown, — by that fact alone the New World was discovered. He had accomplished his task. But God destined him for other trials, and other recompenses.

A certain school is obstinately determined to see in the Discovery nothing but the effect of *Chance*; or, at most, but the application of a new idea in hydrography. They reduce the merit of this prodigy to a mere change of route. The Portuguese, say they, attempted to reach the Indies by going eastwards, following the coasts of Africa, when Christopher Columbus thought of reaching them by sailing westwards across the Atlantic Ocean. He found some islands, which he had no great right to count as discoveries, and which he mistook for Asia; hence he did not find what he sought, and found what he did not seek.

We appeal to good common sense: that movement of the crowds, those marks of astonishment and enthusiasm, and those benedictions of the people of the Azores, of the banks of the Tagus, of Spain, of the whole Christian world,—would they have arisen from a mere change of route? Assuredly, what the Discovery consisted in, what its extent was, or its true name, were not then known; but the conduct of the people indicated the grandeur of the event. At the period of the discovery of the Canaries, of the Azores, of the islands of Cape Verd, did anybody witness those thrills of exultation that were now manifested?

It was felt that Columbus's Discovery was a matter that concerned the destinies of the whole of humanity. The crowds were not transported with joy because the route to Asia was found to the west in place of the east, but because a new world had been discovered. And the legend given to Columbus for his arms is an official proof of it: "For Castile and Leon, Columbus found a new world." *

The assertions of those who attribute the honor of the Discovery to the sole sagacity of Columbus, as well as to the superiority of his scientific knowledge, or of his experience in maritime matters, would have been completely disavowed by himself; for he did not attribute to his genius what he had not received from it, nor to science what it could not have given him. He has positively said that science, atlases, and the mathematics, were but of little service to him in his undertaking; † and the truth of this is seen at every hour of peril.

Thevet, one of our old mariners, who coasted with some of his sailors, says Columbus "was not very experienced in maritime affairs." In his *Cosmography*, published in Milan, in 1556, Jeronimo Girava Terracones judged that "Christopher Columbus, the Genoese, was a great mariner,

* "Por Castilla y por Leon
Nuevo Mundo hallo Colon."

† Columbus. *Libro de las Proficias*, fol. 4.

20*

but only a middling cosmographer." Humboldt declares that "Columbus was but little familiar with mathematics"; accuses him of having made "false observations in the neighborhood of the Azores," and speaks of his "absolute want of knowledge in natural history." A member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences esteems "Aristotle as much more advanced in geography than Christopher Columbus was," and is "astonished at the ignorance of the latter in matters of cosmography."

The Discovery cannot, then, be attributed to the scientific superiority of Columbus. Besides, in his time, several mariners pretended to be abler than he, and were placed above him by public opinion. Since it is not, then, to the genius of Columbus that we can attribute the merit of his work, to what can we refer it?

We answer, without equivocation: The superiority of Columbus, of his genius, and of his grandeur, was owing to his religious faith.

Certainly faith had not infused into him nautical science, which is the result of practice and observation; but his faith having obtained the *grace* of God, he did what others would not dare to do. He *justified*, in advance, by his example, those memorable words of the illustrious Donoso Cortès: "The man accustomed to conversing with God, and to exercising himself in the meditation of divine things, all other circumstances being equal, surpasses other persons, either by the intelligence and force of his understanding, or by the surety of his judgment, or by the penetration and sagacity of his mind; but, especially, I know of none where, in equal circumstances, he will not surpass others in that practical and sober-minded sense which is called common sense." *

His assiduous study of nature having persuaded Columbus that the spherical form is that of the large bodies of creation,

* Denoso Cortès. *Essay on Catholicism, Liberalism and Socialism*, Book II., chap. VIII.

—of the stars and of the planets,—he started from the principle that the earth was round. His mode of conceiving the divine work became proportioned to his elevated idea of the Creator; and his faith in the Redeemer being equal to his belief in the Word by whom all things have been ordained, he soon found, in his knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures, the confirmation of his cosmographic ideas. He was persuaded that this world was created from a plan, and with calculation; * that nowhere is the sun the destroyer of life; that there are no uninhabitable zones; that the *TENEBOUS SEA* could not forever separate the nations, and deprive, always, certain countries of the knowledge of the Word. Columbus firmly believed that the words of the prophet were not in vain, announcing that the confines of the earth should see the Salvation sent by God; that people would come from the north and from the sea.† Consequently, he did not believe that the Creator had delivered any part of our habitation as an inheritance to monsters, and unconquerable brutes. From his confidence in God came his firmness, his patience, his resolution, his tranquillity of mind,—the means of undertaking and of executing his work.

Such, in their simplicity, were the first motives that prompted Columbus,—the basis upon which he founded the project of the Discovery. Mathematics have nothing to see here. Considerations drawn from geography came only to support his theological inferences. Pure science could profit him but little, inasmuch as its principal doctrine was itself an error. It, at that time, taught that the sea occupied only the seventh part of the earth, while it really covers more than two-thirds of it.

Still, the lucidity of his reason, the superiority of his intuition, and the ardor of his faith, do not suffice to explain his enterprise.

We must say it distinctly, for it is the truth, it is useless

* Sap. xi. 21.

† Isaias, xxx: 27, and xlix: 12.

to try to explain, on human principles, the superhuman work of the Discovery. All those who have studied the life of Columbus, — the historians, his cotemporaries, and the historiographers of the Indies, who had the official documents under their eyes, — have been led to recognize, in the circumstances of the arrival of this man in Spain, in those that detained him there, and in those that permitted the execution of his enterprise, an ordering beyond and above mortal foresight.

Unless we absolutely deny all providential action on humanity, we cannot fail in recognizing the divine hand by which Columbus was conducted. If ever the superior power which presides over the government of the worlds should manifest itself in this, it would assuredly have been in the most considerable event of our planet. When we review all the facts and the details of the Discovery, we are forced to acknowledge, with Cladera, the learned author of “*Historical Researches on the Discoveries of the Spaniards in the Ocean*,” that it is necessary to do violence to our reason in not believing that, in such a work, Columbus derived from on high his chief support. The Admiral himself avows, with his modest laconism, that our Redeemer had directed him in the route.* And from the fact that in his mind, in his inmost thought, and in his final object, the enterprise of the Discovery was allied with the triumph of the Cross over the Crescent, and the deliverance of the Holy Places, a singular and wonderful coincidence can be seen between certain incidents, and even certain dates of the voyage.

Friday, — the day of Redemption, the day of the conquest of Jerusalem, the day of the rendition of Granada, — seems to have marked the principal incidents of this Christian expedition.

On Friday Columbus unfurled his sails for the voyage.

* Aca me ordeno neustro Redentor el camino. *Documentos Diplomáticos*, num. CXXXVII.

On Friday he completed his observations on magnetic variation.

On Friday the first signs of the New World were seen in the tropical birds.

On Friday was perceived the sea of herbs, — that great oceanic phenomenon.

On Friday, the twelfth of October, land was discovered.

On Friday, the same day, Columbus planted the first cross in the soil of the New World.

On Friday, the nineteenth of October, he wrote that he would return to Castile in the month of April; and it was in the middle of the month designated that he made his triumphal entry into Barcelona.

On Friday, the sixteenth of November, he found a cross already completely prepared, in a desert island in the sea of Nuestra Señora.

On Friday, the thirtieth of November, he erected a very large cross at Puerto Santo.

On Friday, the fourth of January, at sunrise, he started back for Spain.

On Friday, the same day, in the afternoon, Providence brought back to him the deserter captain, Martin Alonzo Pinzon.

On Friday, the twenty-fifth of January, the sea gives him fresh provisions.

On Friday, the fifteenth of February, having escaped from a most frightful tempest, he sees the Azores.

On Friday, the twenty-second of February, he was restored his crew, seized on by the Portuguese.

On Friday, the eighth of March, the invitation of his enemy, the King of Portugal, becomes the first attestation of his glory.

On Friday, the fifteenth of March, he reëntered Palos in triumph.

Now, remark the strange coincidence of the day of his departure with the day of his return, and of the principal incidents of his voyage.

We have given the dates, and the reader may draw from them the conclusion he pleases. It will no less remain a fact that during the voyage the chief events occurred on a Friday.

If to the singularity of this coincidence we join that of the lot which, in three cases out of four, causes the mark of the Cross to come into the hands of the Admiral, and thus directly designate him as the person who is to accomplish the vows of all,—if in these there is nothing seen but the workings of Chance, or Hazard, it must be allowed that this assiduous Chance, which so obligingly complied with the intentions, the sentiments, and the wishes of Columbus, merited gratitude from him, and ought to receive some consideration from us.

When the messenger of the Cross, confessing the uselessness of the compass and the astrolabe for the Discovery, declared that our Redeemer had directed him in the route, he expressed a truth that is more manifest now than it was when his pen wrote it.

At first, this voyage, undertaken in opposition to the prejudices of the unlearned, and the data of the science that then prevailed, by a fearful route across a redoubtable sea, remains to the present day a model for navigators to follow. Columbus, probably without his knowing it, indicated to future generations the surest and safest route to the Antilles.

The return of Columbus to Europe was, probably, still more astonishing than his outward voyage.

The Admiral did not follow the route already traversed. He had a caravel much damaged in the keel, another damaged in her masting; both leaking. He chose, by inspiration, the surest route,—that which enabled him to avoid the changes of weather and the fogs so common between the Azores and the banks of Newfoundland, and which would enable him to escape the tempests so frequent in the vicinity of the Bermudes. It is true he still encountered frightful tempests; but these great perturbations of the

atmosphere were exceptional. He had taken the most favorable route for his caravels, without decks. An officious Chance turned him from a danger of which he could have no knowledge: and the fierceness of the tempests only showed the better the obliging nature of Chance in protecting him; for, with a vessel so small and crazy as was the *Niña*, 'nobody could, on human principles, explain how he was preserved from a watery grave. The inhabitants of Santa Maria at the Azores, and those of Cascaes and of Lisbon, were justly stupefied with astonishment at seeing how such a small caravel, so much damaged, could have borne against the violence of such storms.

"Such," says Washington Irving, "were the difficulties and perils which attended his return to Europe; had one-tenth of them beset his outward voyage, his timid and factious crew would have risen in arms against the enterprise, and he never would have discovered the New World." *

But this provident and attentive Chance, or Hazard, took very good care, in his outward voyage, to prevent obstacles from being insurmountable, and knew always how to oppose propitious occurrences or coincidences to the most terrible difficulties. When we call to mind the character of the men who accompanied Columbus, the insolence of his officers, even after the Discovery, and his own crew abandoning him when his caravel ran aground, we can judge what would have happened had the wrath of the GLOOMY OCEAN added its perils to the terrors of the imagination.

Happily, officious Chance, which preceded the steps of Columbus, watched him, guided him, and directed him with the greatest solicitude.

This Chance which gives him winds and waves when he needs them; which appeases wrath, and preserves his authority to him at the most critical moment,—this Chance

* *Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, Book V., chap. II.

by which, without any visible index, he predicts the moment of the Discovery, — this Chance which enables him to state, in October, that he will return to the Sovereigns in April, — this Chance which protects him from envy, from hatred, and from the fury of the waves; which foils the ambushes of Portugal, and prepares a triumph for him in the very court of his enemy, — this Chance, so intelligent and so powerful as to thus put on all the airs of Providence, — this Chance, whatever be its name, appears to us a prodigy as miraculous as the most resplendent miracle.

From the very first moment, what the cosmographic system of Columbus presented of the marvellous was perfectly appreciated in Rome. The supernatural character of his mission was there recognized as if by instinct.

And this glorification of Columbus was a striking manifestation of the infallibility of the Church.

We now invite the attention of our readers to a fact which, for the first time, is going to be presented in its reality, and to which the historians of Columbus have not hitherto alluded, — a fact not less curious than ignored; not less ignored than authentic; not less authentic than edifying; and not less edifying than demonstrative of the truly supernatural authority bequeathed by Jesus Christ to His Church.

SECTION V.

On the twenty-fifth of July preceding, while in the midst of the terrors of Palos Columbus was preparing to cross the Atlantic, his illustrious countryman, Pope Innocent VIII., visited by death, went to give God an account of his government of the Church.

His successor was Alexander VI., assuredly one of the least worthy popes mentioned by history; but whose faults, it must be said, have been grossly exaggerated by the spirit

of party, especially in confounding the private life of the soldier with the official and regular life he led after his election to the tiara. Nevertheless, such as he was, with his qualities and his defects, then common to the greater part of the great lords of his time, as long as he acts in quality of inheritor of the primacy of Peter, he commits no errors and yields to no frailties; none of his acts are censurable. As De Maistre has remarked, his Bullary is without reproach. And from the fact that the legacy of the spiritual power, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail, seems guaranteed by Providence against the errors of human weakness, it would appear that this pontiff, on account of his very infirmity, was destined to show the better, in its splendor, the indefectible power of the See of St. Peter.*

Agreeably to the advice of Columbus, the Catholic Sovereigns petitioned the Sovereign Pontiff to grant them the donation of the lands they had discovered in the West, and of those they still hoped to discover there.

Whatever may have been the personal feelings of Alexander VI. towards the court of Spain, the demand could not be immediately accorded; this affair would require the greatest prudence. Already Portugal had obtained a privilege for its discoveries in the East.

It would be necessary that a favor now accorded to Spain should occasion no conflicts under the reigns of the present monarchs, or in future ages; and that the action of the Apostolate should not lead to sanguinary rivalries between

*Alexander VI., like Columbus, his cotemporary, has been the victim of the vilest calumnies from many Catholic as well as non-Catholic writers; so I purpose, after getting through with this work, preparing for publication, in English, the true life of that pontiff, derived from original documents, and other authentic cotemporary writings. In the mean time, I would beg leave to refer the reader who wishes to know the real history of that pope, to the "Dublin Review" for January, 1859, No. XC.; Article, *History in Fiction*. — B.



Christian nations. Still, it was necessary to assign limits to the claims of the two Catholic Crowns.

Here was the difficulty: Where did the East end? and where did the West commence, in the illimitable space of the ocean? Such was the problem to be solved.

Never had there been a more delicate geographical or political difficulty submitted to the Papacy. According to the traditional prudence of the Holy See, and the ordinary temporizations of the Roman chancery, such a question would, at first, have to be taken up by commissions of cosmographers in Portugal, in Castile, and in Italy; and their reports would have to be deliberated upon, in order to come to a sure decision. A delay of two years would have been necessary for such an investigation.

But evidently the Spanish Sovereigns attached to their written petition a copy of the notes penned by Columbus in his cell at La Rabida. And such was the interest this Christian enterprise created in Rome, and such the confidence of the Holy See in the holiness of purpose and purity of motive of Columbus, that, without hesitation or delay, as if suddenly enlightened in regard to the work and the man of the Discovery, it accepts his cosmographic system; recognizes, explicitly, the spheroidal form of the earth, and its rotation on its axis, having the two poles for its extremities; and maintains all the scientific deductions of Columbus. In the then contradictory state of cosmography, this declaration was strikingly bold.

Alexander VI. does not treat as a diplomatic negotiation the privilege he is about to concede. Here he yields to no personal predilection; it is not an act of condescension of a Spanish pope to Spanish sovereigns. There is no longer either Spaniard or sovereign to be thought of here; the Pontiff proceeds solely as Chief of the Church, with the aid of the venerable cardinals present then in Rome; for the question is not concerning an international interest, or of an affair to regulate for Castile, but about interests of

vital importance to Catholicity, to the salvation of souls, and to the extension of the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

As the demand of Castile was just, the Sovereign Pontiff, with the concurrence of the Sacred College surrounding him, accorded it, by his Bull of the third of May, 1494.

The principle being granted, the question was how to regulate its application, — to fix a limit to the expeditions of the Castilians, and to divide between these and the Portuguese the unknown parts of the globe, into which these two powers were to introduce the Gospel and civilization.

It is here we see visibly the participation of the Church in the Discovery, and where we perceive her agency, in the benediction given by Innocent VIII. to the enterprise of his countryman. His successor accepts, as a pontifical obligation, the patronage of the Discovery of the New World. He has faith in Columbus. He yields full credence to him in extraordinary things; requires no proof from him, and justifies his calculations. It is solely on Columbus he depends; it is relying on Columbus that he engages in the vast partition of the unexplored world, between the Crowns of Spain and of Portugal. Everything the Messenger of the Cross proposes is granted in full, as a thing that is indicated by Providence. The Chief of the Church imposes on the Crowns of Spain and of Portugal the vast proportions of the geometric calculation made by Columbus. To assign them the limit that would maintain each respectively in its rights, the Sovereign Pontiff, with a superhuman confidence, draws on the map (as yet informal) of the world a line which, departing from the North Pole, passing a hundred leagues to the west of the Azores and the Cape de Verd Islands, traverses the Southern Ocean to the Antarctic Pole; thus going round the whole earth without coming across (oh, prodigy!) the least habitable spot about which there could be any contest.

The miraculous precision of this line was meant to secure to Spain, in recompense for her zeal, the exclusive posses-

sion of the new continent in its whole extent. Some Protestants have remarked that the Holy See, by this demarcation, exposed itself to the danger of putting these two rival nations in presence of each other at the same point, inasmuch as the line passed over latitudes and longitudes which no ship had ever traversed; and that it is presumable that, in so vast a prolongation, the line would cross some land. Yes, but this line has miraculously passed through the only space in which there is no land found. Here is the prodigy of the thing!

If the illumination of Columbus's genius, that mental look of a prophetic reach cast on the face of the earth with so much justness and fairness, astonishes us, we are no less seized with admiration at the absolute confidence the Papacy reposes in Columbus. We must bow, with respect, before that exceptional confidence which authenticates and sanctions as things already verified the intuitions of his genius.

Rome comprehended Columbus. Now, to comprehend is, in a certain sense, to become equal to. All the sympathies of the Holy Father, and of the Sacred College, were in favor of Columbus.

Never could there have been submitted to the chair of Peter an affair more grave or more delicate, or one that apparently required more slowness of action; and still, as has been well remarked by Humboldt, "never was there a negotiation with the Court of Rome terminated in a shorter time." What surprises this *savant* is the two Bulls, "literally the same in the first half," issued "in the interval of twenty-four hours."*

His surprise shows how much the illustrious Protestant was a stranger to the character of Columbus. It is precisely this distinction between the two Bulls (when one would have sufficed) which proves the esteem of the Papacy for

* Humboldt. *Histoire de la Géographie du Nouveau Continent*, t. III., p. 54.

the Revealer of the Globe, and the importance it attached to his work. In the first Bull, — that of the third of May, — which is called the Bull of Concession, the Holy See awards to Spain the lands discovered, with the same privileges and rights which the popes accorded to the King of Portugal, in 1438 and 1439. This is the donation made to Spain, on the demand of her Sovereigns. But the next day, the fourth of May, in proceeding to the separation of these two donations, in order to solemnize the better this unique measure without a precedent or an analogue, the Sovereign Pontiff consecrates, by a particular Bull, the boundary he has fixed, which is the same as that pointed out by Columbus, in whom he has full confidence. A circumstance characteristic of the reason why these two were separated was this: The Pope, in speaking of Columbus in the Bull of Concession, of the third of May, limited himself to calling him his “dear son,” without qualifying him more explicitly. But the next day, in the Bull of Partition, or *Repartimiento*, as it is sometimes called, as if he felt it his duty to give a more solemn testimony of esteem to the messenger of the Good News, the Chief of the Church characterizes, officially, the hero who had enlarged the world. He does not confine himself to calling him his “well-beloved son” (*dilectum filium*); he recognizes him as fully worthy of this mission; and certifies that he is highly worthy of praise by many titles, — *et plurimum commendandum*; and declares that he was destined for so great a work, — *ac tanto negotio aptum*.

This Bull of Partition bears, evidently, the character of a benediction and of a divine recompense.

Here we no longer find the mode of proceeding of the Roman chancery. The Holy Father speaks on his own responsibility. After having declared that he knows the two Sovereigns to be truly Catholic monarchs; that he has always known them, and that their piety is well known throughout the whole Christian world, — after having mentioned their constancy, their labors, their expenses, their

fatigues, their perils, their conquest of Granada, and their expulsion of the Mahometans, the Sovereign Pontiff recalls to mind that they have joined to these titles of glory the intention of diffusing the Faith in islands and in a *terra firma* that are unknown, in order to have the Redeemer adored there. The Chief of the Church declares that he recommends to God this holy and praiseworthy object. He moreover declares that he grants this donation of exclusive privilege, not to the direct demands of the Sovereigns, or of other persons acting for them, but that he does it of his own accord and from his own pure liberality, acting knowingly, with certainty, and in the plenitude of his apostolic power.*

Still, this liberality of the Vicar of Jesus Christ is, like the greater part of papal recompenses, submitted to a certain condition. The Sovereign Pontiff orders the two Sovereigns, in virtue of holy obedience, to send to these countries men of probity, fearing God, well informed, experienced, and capable of forming the inhabitants to the Catholic faith and good morals.

In the whole of this Bull one feels that there is a supernatural grandeur and an imposing majesty pervading it.

In concluding it, the Sovereign Pontiff reminds the two monarchs that the source of all power, of all empire, comes from God alone; and announces to them that, if confiding in Him, they persevere in the accomplishment of their design in the manner pointed out to them, God will direct their actions, and that soon their efforts will have the most prosperous success for the happiness and the glory of the whole Christian world.

SECTION VI.

While in all Christian countries the name of Columbus was winning the highest admiration and praise, his person

* Bull of the fourth of May, 1493. *Coleccion Diplomatica*, num. xviii.

received in Spain unusual honors. At all times he was admitted to the presence of the Sovereigns. He was treated with the most extreme deference. Queen Isabella could not tire of asking him questions and listening to him. She created new armorial bearings for him, permitting him to quarter, in his blazon, the royal arms of Castile and of Leon with his own proper ones. Nothing was decided in regard to the new expedition without having it submitted to him.

Such was the favor in which he was held, that often the King was seen riding on horseback, having at his right his son, the heir-presumptive of the throne, and at his left the Admiral of the Ocean, — an honor that had never an example. At this time the King felt proud of Columbus, who had become the object of the enthusiastic admiration of the people, and of the jealousy of the powerful.

After the Sovereigns, the first Spaniard who rendered distinguished honors to Columbus was a prince of the Church, — the Grand Cardinal of Spain, — Mendoza.

With this intention he gave him a splendid banquet, assigned him the place of honor, and had him served under a dais, as a monarch, with covered dishes; each viand that was presented to him being first tasted before him, according to royal etiquette, and treating him in every respect conformably to his title of Viceroy. This banquet opened the series of festivities that were rendered him by the highest personages of Spain, and became the rule of the etiquette which was respectively observed in his regard.

It is with this solemn banquet that some persons have connected the anecdote of the egg, — that insipid story to which the memory of Columbus probably owes its greatest popularity in Europe.

One of the party, it is said, having asked him whether, if he had not discovered the Indies, some other person would not have done so: as his only response the Admiral ordered an egg to be brought him, and proposed that it should be made to stand on an end on the table. One

after the other the guests tried it in vain ; then he took it, and breaking it a little on one extremity, made it stand on the flattened one. Such, in substance, is the story as it is told. Washington Irving hesitates not to give it credit. To surpass him, no doubt, M. de Lamartine has this farce acted at the very table of King Ferdinand.

We will not waste our time in demonstrating the absurdity of this tale by its utter improbability. In the first place, it is without sense or wit ; it proves nothing, it explains nothing. No consequence to the point can be inferred from it. It is no more an answer than it is an allusion ; and presents, on the whole, but a gross piece of trickery.

It was not by breaking an egg at the end, when the question was how to maintain it by its own equilibrium, that the Admiral showed the cause of the Discovery. It was not by this low artifice, — this want of delicacy, — that he would show his superiority of genius and of perseverance. Would Columbus have explained the favors with which Providence had loaded him, and justified the truth of his theory by a juggler's trick ? and, still more, by a clumsy trick, not to say an unfair one ?

The circumstances of time and of place tend no less to contradict this silly story. Who then would have dared, whether at the table of the Sovereigns, or at that of the Grand Cardinal, to propose so impertinent a question to the Viceroy of the Indies ? Who would have ventured a question that would be as disobliging as it would be disrespectful ? And how could the Admiral have forgotten the rules of etiquette to the point of giving orders to his august host, and ask that an egg be brought him ? Was this sport compatible with the number and the dignity of the guests ?

None of the Spanish historians have mentioned such a circumstance. The Milanese, Girolamo Benzoni, the only old historian who relates this miserable story, was, no doubt, unable to distinguish his former recollections from each other. At any rate, the anecdote of the egg is most

positively of Italian origin; we recognize it as such, and we have every reason to think that Columbus must have heard it from the lips of his own mother. With some probability it has been attributed to the celebrated architect Brunellesco, by whom the church of Santa Maria del Fiore raises its cupola into the sky of Florence. Here the fact does not seem improbable, however trifling it may appear to be. Around a joyous table at a tavern, Florentine artists may come to these bantering questions, to these jugglings, where jesting holds the place of reason, and where one can avail himself of "pill and poll" rather than of logic. At such a table we can easily conceive such a trivial trick to be played, but not elsewhere. Before us, Voltaire has said that the story of the egg was referred to Brunellesco.* Upon this point we are entirely of his opinion.

For the dignity of history, we beseech our readers to recite no longer this miserable anecdote, and not to impute to the Revealer of the Globe so unworthy a trick. To believe it would be to misunderstand strangely his genius, his dignity, his elevation of sentiment, and the atmosphere of glory and of respectability which his grandeur at that time inspired.

A satisfaction superior in his mind to all the honors he had yet received, came to increase the happiness of the Viceroy of the Indies. He had the joy of learning that his respectable father, still enjoying all his intellectual faculties, rejoiced in his success, or rather his triumph, as did formerly the patriarch Jacob at the elevation of his son Joseph. Christopher was, also, the next in dignity after the King. On his return to Spain he sent to his father a trustworthy person to bear to him marks of his pious affection, and to ask him for permission to attach to his service his young brother James, afterwards known as Don Diego, then a wool-comber at Genoa. The old gentleman courageously consented to have this last link of the family circle rup-

*Voltaire. *Essai sur les Mœurs*, c. CXLIV.

tured, and to remain without any of his children. We have proof that after the second departure of the Admiral the old wool-comber still remained in the neighborhood of Arco, which he had chosen on quitting Savone.

At the time we are speaking of, James Columbus, aged twenty-six years, was working at his trade. On receiving his brother's letter he abandoned, without pride, his wool-combing business, to become in a few weeks *aid-de-camp* to the Admiral of the Ocean, and afterwards administrator and Governor-General *ad interim*. With that facility, or rather with those graces which Providence bestowed on the posterity of the old comber, in quitting the workshop to mix with the grandeurs and honors of Spain, James, or Don Diego, appeared not to be out of his sphere. He soon attracted respectful notice, as is shown by the following circumstance:—

The seven Indians led by Columbus to Barcelona had learned from him the principles of Christianity. He inspired them with Faith. They besought, of themselves,* to be admitted to baptism, which they were judged qualified to receive. A grand pomp solemnized these religious first-fruits of the Indies. The King, the Infant Don Juan, and the first personages of the Court, were the sponsors of the catechumens. Don Diego Columbus became one of the seven godfathers. He, after the King and the Infant, occupied one of the five first places of the Court at this ceremony. As for Christopher Columbus himself, being as a father to all the Indians, he did not become the godfather of either of them; for in the Catholic Church the father cannot serve as godfather to his own children. The favor accorded to Don Diego, on the occasion of this baptism, shows what a sovereign influence the Admiral then exercised on the Court, and on public opinion.

* Herrera. *Histoire des Indes Occid.*, dec. 1, liv. 11, chap. v.

CHAPTER XII.

Preparations for the Second Expedition. — The first Bureau of the Colonies. — The Father Superior of La Rabida embarks with Columbus

SECTION I.

WHAT man, after having so long endured the airs of patronage or pity of those who had seen him wait patiently, in vain, in antechambers, finding himself immediately, in his turn, sought and solicited by the great, would not have enjoyed his triumph over fortune? Still, history does not detect in Columbus the least symptom of weakness. Writers have been unanimous in lauding his modesty and unvarying artlessness. He wished he could escape from those noisy praises and those pompous receptions, in order to go to Rome, and depose at the foot of the Holy See the account of his voyages, and to implore for spiritual favors. But the service of the Crown of Castile would not permit this pilgrimage. John II., King of Portugal, listening to the advice of his courtiers to have the precedence of Spain in the new expeditions, prepared for the matter secretly.

Each Court had its secret agents in the other, to apprise it of everything going on that concerned it. So, as soon as the Spanish monarchs received certain information of the designs of Portugal, they displayed great activity. A worldly-minded ecclesiastic, Don Juan de Fonseca, Archdeacon of Seville, but a bureaucrat by instinct, and a brother to men in high credit with King Ferdinand, was charged to provide for the armament of the fleet, and to superintend the execution of the measures already prescribed by Columbus when going to Seville. Conjointly

with this Director, or Superintendent-General of the Marine, there was created the office of Controller-General, to which Juan de Soria, of a bureaucratic family, was promoted; then, the place of Paymaster, to which Francisco Pinelo seemed destined as a matter of right; he was a member of the municipality of Seville, had a reputation for probity, and was the person who lent the Queen five millions of maravedis for this armament. Such was the first germ of that powerful colonial administration which was afterwards to become the royal Council of the Indies.

Among other preparations for the new expedition, an order to freight a vessel of two hundred tonnage was issued to Juanoto Berardi, a Florentine fitter-out, established at Seville, who was in relation with all the ports in the matter of provisioning ships. He was familiarly known at court by his Christian name, Juanoto. He had as first clerk a countryman of his, an excellent arithmetician, an amateur of cosmography and of polite literature, who, if he did not amass a great fortune in conducting the affairs of his patron, prepared, by his relations with the Admiral, the bases of a renown which has surpassed his knowledge, his merit, his voyages, and, probably, his pretensions. This clerk was named Amerigo Vespucci.

Afterwards, the Queen adjudged an annuity of ten thousand maravedis to the Admiral, as being the first who perceived the light on the island of San Salvador.

The next day, the twenty-fourth of May, the Queen ordered him to be paid, by Francisco Pinelo, a thousand doubloons in gold, to defray his expenses. The twenty-sixth, an order was issued, that wherever he should arrive he should have lodgings gratuitously for himself, as well as for the five domestics of his suite, and that all the baggage of his household should pass duty free.

Two days after, the Admiral was nominated Captain-General of the Fleet of the Indies. He was authorized to make direct nominations, himself, to all the offices of the new government. The royal seal was confided to him, with

authority to use it as he may judge proper: and, afterwards, the Sovereigns, by a solemn act, confirmed all the titles and privileges that were assured to him by the treaty of Santa Fé.

Loaded with marks of consideration, with testimonials of admiration and of gratitude, Columbus at last took his leave of the Sovereigns. After the audience he was conducted from the palace to his dwelling by the whole Court, with great ceremony.

It was thus that he left Barcelona loaded with honors, with felicitations, and bearing with him the high hopes that Spain had reposed in him.

SECTION II.

Still, in the midst of this general triumph, a voice was heard in the crowd execrating and cursing Columbus: it was that of a sailor of Seville named Juan Rodriguez Bermejo, who, the first on board the *Pinta*, halloed "Land!" the night of Wednesday, the twelfth of October, 1492, and who claimed the annuity of ten thousand maravedis. He conceived, it is said, such spite because it was adjudged to another, that he went over to Africa and became a Mahometan, thinking of finding more justice among Mussulmans than among Christians.

It has been said that this dispute with a poor sailor about the recompense, "little accorded with the acknowledged magnanimity of Columbus." Fortunately, the disinterestedness of the Admiral defends him from every suspicion of cupidity. He was the first who perceived land, since he saw the light at ten o'clock, and announced what the obscurity of the night did not permit the sailor to see until two in the morning. The fact sufficiently justified his claim to the royal prize. Moreover, this title of annuity becoming an official proof of the priority of Discovery, the Admiral should not cede his right to any person.

On the morrow of his departure, the Sovereigns ad-

dressed general instructions to the Admiral for the government of the colony he was to found. It is a curious fact, that these instructions were nothing more than the coördination of Columbus's own ideas, and that they all had been suggested by him only. So he received as a rule of conduct, his own judgment. The first lines of this document that have come down to us, testify once more the religious sentiments of the Queen, and her appreciation of the superhuman character of the Discovery. Filled with respect for the Revealer of the Globe, Isabella seemed to have resigned into his hands the sovereign authority of the new countries. She decided nothing without consulting him; and when she desired to nominate any person in the government of the Indies, she demanded from him the approbation of the Admiral.

The Sovereigns having received from Rome the Brief nominating a Vicar-Apostolic for the Indies, addressed an official copy of it to Father Boil, — a religious of the Benedictine Order, highly esteemed by Ferdinand for his tact in diplomacy, — charging him to prescribe everything that was necessary for the divine service.

Desiring to provide for it with magnificence, Isabella made a gift, to the future church in the Indies, of all the necessary material, of sacred vessels, and a complete set of ornaments taken from the royal chapel. Twelve religious, chosen from among the different religious orders, were to accompany the Vicar-Apostolic.

From the Court, messengers were despatched in quick succession to the Admiral, and to the Director of the Marine, to hasten the departure of the fleet. The end of July had come; the Admiral had received the solemn homage of the Commandant and Captains of the Fleet. He reviewed a small corps of cavalry from Granada that was to embark at Cadiz. The horses were noble animals, and worthy of the accoutrements of their riders. The Director and the Controller of the Marine, having an interest that the keen eye of the Admiral should not perceive the secret arrange-

ments made with the sub-contractors, became openly hostile to him. Juan de Soria, to make a parade of his virtue at Columbus's expense, and to show his incorruptible integrity, refused to enter on the file of equipments a domestic belonging to the Admiral, although, in his quality as Chief, the latter could give orders to everybody. His functions as Controller, his zeal for the Crown, already involved in so many expenses, forbade him to yield to the desire of the Admiral, which he taxed with being extravagant. Feeling that he was sustained by the Director, Fonseca, he went so far as to be wanting in personal respect for the Admiral; the latter piously bore the indignity in silence.

The conduct of Juan de Soria became the topic of conversation at Court. The Vicar-Apostolic, sensible of the outrage, wrote about it to the Queen. Father Boil was, at that time, one of the sincere admirers of the elect of Providence.

Isabella immediately wrote a letter to Columbus capable of repairing the offence. The same day, — the fourth of August, — she wrote to the Archdeacon of Seville, recommending to him to have the greatest regard for Columbus; to smooth every difficulty, and to see that nobody opposed him. She enjoined him to satisfy him in everything, — not only in the matter, but also in the form. She charged him to notify Juan de Soria that he would have to conform to the desires of the Admiral; that he must oppose him in nothing whatever, and to say to him that his conduct gave her much displeasure. The next day, not being able to contain her indignation, she had a severe letter written to the Controller of the Marine, intimating to him that she required that the Admiral should be treated with consideration and honor, and conformably to his title, and threatening him with chastisement in case of a second offence. The eighteenth her resentment had not yet calmed; in sending orders to Fonseca, concerning the departure of the fleet, she again reminded him of the regard he owed the Admiral, and, addressing other orders to Juan de Soria, she

could not refrain from again reprimanding the latter for his past fault.*

In order to cut short all differences that may arise in regard to the *personnel* Columbus may take with him at the expense of Castile, the Queen fixed the household of the Grand Admiral at thirty persons: ten squires afoot bearing swords, and twenty domestics of every grade, in pay of the Crown. Isabella recommended further that the Admiral should be pleased in everything, because she desired it, and such was her good pleasure; and that she would be much displeased if the reverse should happen.

It would be hard to carry royal favor farther. The sincerity of Isabella cannot be doubted. To her admiration for the extraordinary man whom Heaven had sent her as a visible recompense for her faith, were joined delicate sympathies, strengthened by conformity of views in many respects, and producing a tenderness almost maternal.

It is to be regretted that the long correspondence between the Queen and the Admiral, henceforward lost to the world, is reduced to some fragments of official missives, the greater part of short and of only commonplace interest. The last letter the Queen addressed to Columbus at the moment of his entering on his second voyage, shows with what fineness of intellect and scientific curiosity she pursued the question of the Discovery.

Twenty days before that on which the minister of Providence went again to explore the ocean, the Queen, in returning him the book of his navigation, — which remained in her hands, and of which she had taken a copy, — assured him that save the King and herself, no mortal had read a word of it. She said to him that the more she read it, the more she saw how much his scientific knowledge surpassed any that was ever possessed by a mortal being. She

* Letter of the fourth of August, to Fonseca. Of the fifth, to Juan de Soria. Schedule of the eighteenth of August, to Juan de Soria. *Colec. Diplom.*, Nos. LXIII., LXV., LXVI.

insisted on having hydrographical and geographical directions, which would enable her the better to follow on the chart the islands and lands he would have discovered. She desired that he should mark the degrees and measure the distances on the chart, which she requested him to send her, promising him to keep it concealed if he so desired it. To solace him in his scientific observations, she counselled him to take with him a good astronomer; and, thinking of anticipating his wishes, she had the ingenious address of nominating, as if done by herself, his faithful friend, Father Juan Perez de Marchena, whose name, through mistake, she wrote "Antonio" in place of "Juan." "Because," said she, "he is a good astronomer, and it has always appeared to me that his sentiments are perfectly conformable to yours."* At the same time, in order to prevent delays, she enclosed an order signed in blank, that he may inscribe on it the name of the astronomer he would prefer.

It was just that this Franciscan, who was the first to appreciate the mission of Columbus, — who welcomed him in his lowliness, participated in his theory, had a presentiment of the existence of the New World, and who had prayed to God and supplicated the Queen for its Discovery, — should be the first to celebrate the sacred mysteries in the immensity of the ocean, and the first to bless these unknown shores in the name of Christ the Redeemer. And to bring this about, a singular concurrence of circumstances operates in his favor. Without solicitation on his part, he is called by the Queen to this voyage. It is as a *savant* that he is a member of the expedition. It is by this title that he is on board the Admiral's ship, forms a part of the ship's officers, necessarily disembarks with them to take every possession, and thus finds himself the first priest, the first religious, that enjoyed the happiness of planting the Cross in the new soil.

* *Documentos Diplomáticos*, number LXXI.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

His Departure. — His Arrival at the Canaries. — He determines to consecrate to the Blessed Virgin the first Lands he will discover, and directs his Course to the Caribbees. — The second of December he announces that Land will be discovered the next day, which becomes a fact. — Diego Marquez wanders in the Land of the Cannibals. — Dominica, Guadeloupe, Montserrat, Antigua, Santa Cruz, St. Ursula, and the Eleven Thousand Virgins.

SECTION I.

A NUMBER of boats were ploughing incessantly the Bay of Cadiz. Fourteen caravels anchored around three large caracks, the most elevated of which, the *Maria Galanta* (the *Gracious Mary*), bearing the standard of the Admiral, contained within them the preparations for a colony.

Besides provisions, seeds, young trees, wheat, rye, oats, and leguminous plants, to confide to the bowels of the earth, the Admiral caused to be embarked some animals, particularly horses for reproduction, farming utensils, chalk, brick, iron, etc. Without counting the ships' officers, the religious, military men, laborers, gardeners, blacksmiths, masons, carpenters, and domestics, — forming an effective number of five hundred men in the pay of the Crown, — a number of persons, of every age and of every rank, rendered enthusi-

astic for the regions of spices and of gold, solicited the favor of going there at their own expense. Only seven hundred could be admitted, who were distributed among the caravels. But such was the greediness for gold, that more than three hundred of these fortune-seekers glided secretly into the ships. What a contrast between the consternation and the tears that characterized the first departure from Palos, and the overflowing of joy and the lively anticipations that now resounded around the fleet!

On board the *Gracious Mary* there were remarked Gil Garcia, alcaid-major; Bernal Diaz de Pisa, lieutenant of the controllers-general; Sebastien de Olano, receiver of the crown taxes; the astronomer, Father Juan Perez de Marchena; the physician-in-chief, Doctor Chanca; some hidalgos; Melchor Maldonada, a cousin to the cosmographer of that name; and two baptized Indian interpreters, one of whom had as godfather the brother of the Admiral, and called the same as he was,—Diego Colon. There also was seen, as a simple passenger, the estimable Francisco de Casaus, better known under the name of Las Casas. His son, Barthelemy, whom his ardent love for the Indians ought one day to immortalize, was then pursuing his first studies at Seville.

The Admiral, somewhat ailing, but with a mind ever vigorous, had by him his youngest brother, Don Diego, whom he took with him, and his two sons, Diego and Fernando, who came to give him their last embraces and adieus. At the moment when it was announced that the wind was favorable, the Admiral found himself well; and the twenty-fifth of September, an hour before sunrise, in sight of his two sons, (who gazed on him from the shore), from his ship, the *Gracious Mary*, he gave the order for sailing.

The fleet, spreading their sails with alacrity, followed him, steering for the Canaries, where they put into port. They arrived there the first of October, departed the next day, and on the fifth came alongside of Gomera, to take

in wood and water, and purchase calves, goats, and sheep, which they thought could be more easily acclimated in the new countries than the animals raised in Spain. There they took in eight hogs, the parent stock of nearly all the hogs of the Antilles and of the new continent.

The seventh of October, each captain of a caravel received a sealed letter, which he was not to open but in case of his getting separated from the fleet by bad weather. It marked the route to be followed to arrive directly at Hispaniola.

Columbus directed his course further to the south than he had done in his first voyage. He wished to come to the terrible Caribs, of whom he had heard such dreadful reports, and he took the direct course to get to them. The Admiral had chosen the *Gracious Mary* for his pavilion, because of her name. It is known that he was very devout to the Blessed Virgin.* He placed his second voyage under her special protection, and resolved to give her name to the first islands he would discover. The patroness of mariners, the Ocean Star, seemed pleased with this homage, and to favor his voyage. There were none of those fields of seaweed they met with in their first voyage.

On the evening of Saturday, the second of November, Columbus was convinced, from the sudden variations of the winds, the character of the rains, and the color of the waves, that land must be close at hand, though nobody else even suspected it. He was so certain of it, that he gave orders to take in sail, and to have arms ready for any event that may occur. He judged with his usual sagacity. Early in the morning of Sunday, the third, a mountainous island was descried in the west, which, in honor of the day, he named Dominica.

Solemn thanks were rendered to God by the whole fleet. The joy was extreme ; for all the raw voyagers, having found that their life on board was much more constrained than what they were accustomed to, sighed for land. In making

* Herrera. *Histoire gener. des Voyages*. Dec. I., liv. vi.

for this island, another one was discovered to the right of the *Gracious Mary*. It was covered with tall forests. A little further on, four others were perceived. The Admiral, not being able to find a convenient port in Dominica, directed his course to the second island. He landed on this, bearing the royal banner of the expedition, and took possession of it in the name of their Highnesses, in legal form; and, consecrating it to the Virgin, he gave it the name of his ship, *Maria Galanta*. Father Boil and his religious were not on board the Admiral's vessel, but on board another one. In his quality as astronomer, the friend of Columbus, Father Juan Perez de Marchena, was by him. He was thus the first minister of Jesus Christ that trod the soil of the New World; and he must have been the person that blessed all the wooden crosses that Columbus planted in all the lands he discovered, to express the object of his enterprise, and to render homage to the Redeemer.

The next day, the Admiral made for the largest island of the group, and gave it the name of *Guadaloupe*, in grateful remembrance of Our Lady of the Convent of Guadaloupe, in Spain, and agreeably to the promise made to the religious of that monastery.

The smallest of the caravels was sent to find a landing-place. The captain, having found a place for anchoring, went ashore, accompanied by some of his men, and entered some houses whence the inhabitants had fled without waiting to take all their children with them. Here they found two very large parrots; a quantity of cotton, some spun and some woven; a quantity of provisions, and especially four or five bones of the legs and arms of human beings.

The Admiral found himself in the principal of these Caribbean islands, towards which he directed his course in leaving the Canaries. With a precision which savors of a prodigy, he came in a straight line to the centre of the principality of the cannibals; for Guadaloupe, which its ferocious inhabitants called *Turuquiera*, was the seat of the confederation of the man-eaters.

SECTION II.

The next morning, the Admiral sent into the interior some detachments, under the conduct of captains, to procure some information about the inhabitants of the island. These detachments were distributed in certain places, which they reconnoitred in vain, and returned without being able to find a single man. They met with a little boy, whose father, no doubt, left him in order to flee more speedily. They also brought with them some foreign women, who were retained captives in the island, as well as a youth of about fourteen years of age. They took and brought with them some native women also; but these would not go to the caravels, only constrained by force.

In the evening, Diego Marquez, charged with the command of one of the caravels, having gone ashore, without permission, with eight men, did not return aboard. The next day they did not appear, and therefore the Admiral became very uneasy about them. It was feared that they were devoured by the Caribs; for they had among them very able mariners, who, by the sole observation of the stars, could find their way back. The Admiral sent some strong parties in search of them; he had trumpets sounded, and arquebuses fired in the woods. After having waited in vain two days, to rouse the spirit of discipline he feigned to be going to depart, saying that, as they went ashore without his permission, they must abide the risks and perils. The friends of Marquez implored him not to abandon these unhappy people to the ferocity of the cannibals. He appeared to be overcome by their supplications, and waited longer. In the mean time he took in wood and water, and had the matter of washing strictly attended to. Then he sent the fearless Alonzo de Ojeda, whose sagaciousness was known to him, to search everywhere around, at the head of forty men. Notwithstanding the activity of Alonzo's march across trackless forests, and his discharging arquebuses

and sounding the trumpet at intervals, he returned without a trace of his countrymen, or even of a native.

The Admiral, on his part, made, with the ship's officer, frequent incursions into the island, examining the soil and the deserted dwellings of the tribe. They saw a number of human skulls, that were used as utensils; found in one house the neck of a man cooking in a kind of pot, and in other dwellings several human heads and limbs suspended from the beams of the houses, as if curing for provisions.

They learned from the captive women that the men of that part of the island, to the number of about three hundred, with their chief, had gone in ten large canoes, to catch men for their provisions, in the neighboring islands. They went even to the distance of a hundred leagues in these canoes, to seize on men whose flesh appeared to them a delicious dish. They did not much esteem that of women or of children. Still, as the occasion offered, they seized on both children and women,—the former to fatten, and to eat them when they would come to the age of puberty; the latter to serve them as slaves, or as mistresses, when their beauty would merit that honor. If they had children by them, the unfortunate little ones were not spared. In spite of the entreaties of their mothers, they were unfeelingly mutilated, employed in various offices until puberty, and then slaughtered for eating. The cannibals treated them like capons, in order the better to fatten and to improve the flavor of their flesh. They preserved only the children whose mothers were born in the island.

More than twenty captive women followed the Spaniards to their vessels, and three young boys came also to seek refuge among them. These unfortunate boys had all three undergone mutilation. At several times, captives came begging the Spaniards to take them with them. Columbus, after having decorated them with hawks'-bells and glass beads, had them sent on shore, against their will. He thought the sight of these ornaments would determine some of the islanders to come to receive such presents.

But the next day, when the sailors went ashore for water, the captives ran to them, deprived of their ornaments. Their masters had brutally stripped them of their finery. They implored the strangers to take them away, liking better to abandon themselves to them than to remain exposed to the cruelty of the cannibals.

At the moment the fleet, after eight days' waiting, was on the point of weighing anchor, Diego Marquez and his companions were seen, leading with them ten women and boys. Their haggard and exhausted looks bespoke what they had suffered. Vainly did they climb trees, to know where they were. The forests were so dense as almost to exclude the light.

Notwithstanding their hardships, and his joy at their return, to make an example of them Columbus had the firmness to put the captain under arrest, and to deprive of part of their rations the eight men who had strayed away without permission.

The next day, at noon, the fleet coasted an island that was high and picturesque. The Admiral named it *Montserrat*, in honor of the celebrated sanctuary of the Virgin, at the hermitage of that name. But no trace of culture or of population was discovered on its shores. Taking advantage of its proximity to them, the cannibals had depopulated it even to the extinction of all human life. "The Caribs had devoured all the inhabitants." Columbus, viewing the place with sadness, passed on without remaining long there.

In the evening another island was discovered. The Admiral, placing it under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin, called it *Santa Maria del Rotunda*.

The next morning a new island, of beautiful appearance, was discerned in the distance. The Admiral put this one also under the patronage of the Virgin, giving it the name of *Santa Maria la Antigua*, which it still bears, under the abbreviation of *Antigua*.

The following day they anchored at an island in which

they saw villages and signs of cultivation. A boat, well manned, was sent on shore, to get water and procure information. They found a village deserted by the men; but they secured six women and a few boys, captives from other islands.

The boatmen, as they were returning with their capture, perceived along the coast a canoe, containing four men, two women and a child, come out from a little cove. The Indians were so stupefied with astonishment at the aspect of the fleet, that they remained for more than an hour motionless, with their eyes fixed on the ships; and as, in their amazement, they had not noticed the boat, it stole close to them, cutting off their retreat to the shore. The Caribs, at last perceiving the manœuvre, resolutely took their bows and arrows; and, although they had to deal with more than twenty-five men, the women, as well as the men, commenced attacking. They soon pierced two of the Spaniards with their poisoned arrows; and were it not for the bucklers and cuirasses of the boatmen, the latter would soon have experienced much evil, so strong were their bows and unerring their aim. Seeing this, the captain had the boat run against the canoe, which was upset. The Caribs did not the less discontinue shooting their arrows, swimming, as dexterously as if they were on land. At length they escaped, diving into the water. The Spaniards were unable to capture only one of these ferocious islanders; but, soon after he was brought on board, he died from the effects of a wound he had received in the conflict.

The next evening they perceived an island, which Columbus named *Santa Cruz* (Holy Cross). The day following, he came in sight of a large island, which was followed by a train of upwards of forty islets. The principal of these he named *Santa Ursula*, and the others he collectively called *The Eleven Thousand Virgins*.

The next day they reached a large and beautiful island, the native country of the Indian women who had taken refuge on board the caravels. The natives called it *Bori-*

quen. The Admiral, coming to change its destinies, gave it the name of the precursor of the Divine Master. He named it *San Juan Bautista*. Exposed to the incursions of the Caribs, the inhabitants, like their enemies, made use of bows and arrows; but only in self-defence. Their neat dwellings and fruitful gardens denoted their possessing a certain degree of ingenuity.

The Admiral now turned his course to Hispaniola, towards the fortress whose garrison occupied his solicitude. They perceived a land which nobody in the fleet knew. Although Columbus passed along a coast which he had never approached, it appeared to be familiar to him. Of the mariners who had already come to Hispaniola, "all were uncertain whether it was the island they were seeking." Still, "we did not the less," says Dr. Chanca, "with the grace of God and the scientific knowledge of the Admiral, take a route as direct as if we had followed a known and traced way."

CHAPTER II.

Ruin of the Garrison left at Hayti. — Guacanagari suspected. —
Founding of the City of Isabella. — Unknown Diseases.

SECTION I.

ON the twenty-second of November, the fleet entered the Gulf of Samana, which the Admiral named Las Flechas, the “Gulf of Arrows.” He at the same time assured them that they had got to Hispaniola. Continuing his exploration towards the north, he examined the qualities of the soil, for, in leaving his little garrison in the fortress, his intention was not to found a city there.

While a boat was sounding the mouth of the Rio del Oro, or Golden River, distant from the fort about seven leagues, some mariners who went ashore found two dead human bodies in the grass; one having his feet bound with a cord of Spanish grass, the other with a cord about his neck, and his arms extended and tied by the wrists to a stake in the form of a cross. These bodies were in such a state of decay, that it was impossible to ascertain whether they were those of Europeans or of natives. The next day they found two other bodies, one having a beard, which no longer left any doubt of their not being Europeans.

This aspect of things produced gloomy forebodings.

Immediately they steered towards the little fortress. It was night when they arrived in its vicinity, but though they came in sight of its situation, they could distinguish nothing. The fleet stood at anchor about a league from land, not venturing among the reefs upon which the *Santa Maria* had foundered the preceding year. All eyes were anxiously

directed towards the site of the fort, hoping to see some light, or hear some sound. Nothing, however, was heard. Astonished at this dead silence, the Admiral ordered two shots to be fired from cannon of the largest calibre, to see if the fortress would respond to them; but the artillery of the fortress made no response. Everything remained in the silence and immobility of the tomb.

Towards midnight a rowing of oars was heard; it was that of two Indians who demanded to see the Admiral. His vessel being shown them, they rowed up to it, declining to go on board. They desired first to see Columbus personally, being unwilling to trust anybody else. The Admiral came and spoke to them from the barricading; but such was their distrust, that they demanded a light to assure themselves that it was he, and no other. On their demand being granted, as soon as they recognized Columbus they mounted on deck without hesitation, and testified great joy in seeing him.

They brought him as presents two golden masks, sent him by Guacanagari, to whom one of the envoys was a cousin. They spoke freely in the presence of the ships' officers. On their being asked by Columbus concerning the fate of the Spaniards, they answered with great *naïvete* that they were well, although several had died of diseases, or of the combats they had with each other; that others had gone to distant places, each taking four or five wives with him. They also said that the two caciques, Caonabo and Mayreni, having made war on Guacanagari, burnt his dwellings, and although he was wounded in the leg, he would come on board the next day with them. Several times during the interview they were plied copiously with wine, and they left, about three o'clock, tolerably intoxicated. It appears that at a moment of bacchanalian unguardedness with the Lucayan interpreter, Diego Colon, one of them avowed to him that all the foreigners were dead. When the faithful Diego Colon reported this to his godfather, the Admiral's brother, he was not believed. On account of the

difference between the dialect of Guanahani and that of Hispaniola, he had ill understood what had been confided to him.

The light of the next morning showed a deserted shore. There was no shouting, nor no rowing among the waters, and no human form appeared on the beach. All was still and silent; judging from the first voyage, they expected to see a multitude of canoes joyously surrounding the fleet, offering all kinds of native productions in the way of exchange, or even as pure gifts. This estrangement of the natives appeared to be of evil augur. The Admiral sent some men to the residence of Guacanagari, but they found it reduced to ashes. They perceived no Indians, but in their dwellings they found some remains of European clothing.

The Admiral, accompanied with the staff-officer, and a party, came ashore, and went straight to the place where the fortress had been erected, but alas! there remained only the site; everything was burnt or demolished. Overcoming his grief, he ordered excavations to be made under the ruins, to find a well, in which he directed the gold and precious things that would be acquired in his absence to be thrown, in case of sudden danger. It was found, but nothing was discovered in it.

While these labors were going on, the Admiral, with his escort, went along the shore to look out for a site for a city. They came to a small village, the inhabitants of which fled at their approach. In the houses they found a number of things that belonged to the Spaniards, and which certainly could not have been obtained in the way of barter, such as a beautiful Moorish robe, stockings, whole pieces of cloth, and the anchor of a caravel.

When Columbus returned to the ruins of the fortress, some Indians with candid looks were there, who were bartering gold. They understood several Spanish words, and knew the names of all those who had remained with Diego de Arana. Near by they pointed out the graves of eleven

of his men, already covered with herbage. They all said that Caonabo and Mayreni had killed them.

Other Indians made their appearance gradually. A brother of Guacanagari came, escorted with guards, to present his respects to the Admiral, whom he saluted in Spanish, and telling him that all the Christians were dead. His account of the causes of the disaster was in every respect conformable to what the preceding Indians had related. Quarrels had arisen among the Spaniards about gold and about women. The authority of Diego de Arana was set at nought. His two lieutenants, Pedro Gutierrez and Escobedo, having killed a man named Diego, went away with nine others, who revolted with them, into the provinces of the King of the Mountains, Caonabo, a prince of Caribbean origin, who immediately put them to death. Others, with arms and ammunition in their hands, deserted to remote places, in order to traffic for gold at their ease. Others, in parties of three or four, marauded about the country, entering the dwellings of the Indians, eating their provisions, taking away their wives and daughters, and maltreating the men. The protection King Guacanagari extended to the Spaniards caused the Indians to bear these outrages patiently ; but the tyranny becoming insupportable, they sought to deliver themselves from these strangers, whom they thought to have come from heaven, but who had made a hell of their existence. The brave Arana, the only officer who had remained faithful to the flag, with ten others, kept at the fortress every night. Unfortunately, depending too much on their cannon, and on the timidity of the natives, they neglected having sentinels, and went to sleep, all at the same time, in perfect security, as they imagined.

Caonabo, who was surnamed Lord of the Golden House, in concert with a neighboring cacique, amassing a numerous army, cautiously traversing the forests, came by a night march and surrounded the fort. They invested it without opposition, all being asleep. At the watchword from

Caonabo, his warriors precipitated themselves on the ramparts, yelling their frightful war-cries, and got possession of the fortress before the inmates could put themselves on their defence. The latter were all massacred, and the fortress was burnt down. Then Caonabo turned his warriors to the other Spaniards who lived outside the fortress. All the dwellings were set on fire, and eight of the unhappy victims, pursued by the Indians, rushed to the waves, and were drowned.

Guacanagari had the generosity to fly to the defence of his unworthy guests; but he was too late. In an engagement between his troops and those of the Lord of the Golden House, Guacanagari, more brave than able, was put to flight, and himself wounded by a stroke of a stone from the hand of Caonabo. His troops gave way at the first shock. He took refuge in a wood, and the conqueror burnt his residence before he could reënter his territory.

Columbus assured those he left at the fortress that they were in perfect security, provided they would adhere to his injunctions. They had everything necessary for the wants of life, and the generosity of Guacanagari provided bountifully for its comforts. In following the recommendations of Columbus, they would have preserved their original influence over the minds of these people, who believed them to be immortal. They could have made them Christians, and happy vassals of the Crown of Castile. Still, after having lost the prestige which the conduct of Columbus had gained for them, their disorderly conduct and oppressions would have remained unpunished, if they had at least adhered to his last injunction, which was, — Never to separate from each other, or to sleep outside of the fortress.

SECTION II.

The Admiral nominated a commission, composed of two engineers, an architect, and a shipbuilder, under the presidency of Melchor Maldonado, to make a topographical

report to him of the most suitable site for a city. While the commission were coasting the shore in a boat, a canoe, in which were two Indians, hailed them. The pilot recognized in one of them the brother of Guacanagari. He came to request the strangers to visit the king, who was confined from his wound. Maldonado, accompanied by the members of the commission, went ashore, and proceeded to the residence of the monarch, which was composed of about fifty buildings. They found him stretched on a hammock, surrounded by seven women. He testified his regret at not being able to see the Admiral; told how Caonabo and Mayreni had massacred the Christians, and wounded himself. The members of the commission believed in the sincerity of his words. When they were leaving, he gave each of them a golden ornament, and charged them to tell the Admiral that he would be grateful to him for a visit, as he was not in a state to go to see him. Besides these entreaties, the brother of Guacanagari was sent to Columbus, to give him a direct invitation.

The next day, after dinner, the Admiral ordered his seventeen caravel captains to go ashore, richly dressed in glittering arms. He soon joined them with his staff officer, whose rich costume would have attracted notice in a large city. He never neglected anything that was calculated to produce a favorable effect. With this brilliant cortege he arrived at the dwelling of the king, who had prepared to receive him.

When Columbus appeared, Guacanagari, without leaving his hammock of cotton network, exhibited great emotion and respect on seeing the Admiral. In expressing his regret for the death of the Christians his eyes filled with tears. He recited their deplorable end, and did not forget the efforts he had made to save them. He pointed out on several of his subjects scars evidently received from Indian weapons, and the bandages that enveloped his own bruised leg. As Doctor Chanca had brought with him a surgeon, who belonged to the marine, Columbus told the king that

they both were very skilful in curing wounds, and invited him to show his wound or bruise to them. This he did readily. Doctor Chanca, finding there was not light enough in the apartment for the examination, said he could see better in the open air. The cacique, leaning on the arm of the Admiral, left his hammock, and, as soon as he was seated, the surgeon removed the bandages. Guacanagari told Columbus that the sore was produced by a stroke of a stone. No trace of contusion or bruise could be perceived externally. Still, he seemed to suffer when it was pressed, or the limb was moved.

The impression of the Spaniards was that the lameness was feigned. Father Boil, impressed with this opinion, believed that Guacanagari was an accomplice in the massacre of the Spaniards; he was of opinion that he should be immediately arrested and made an example of. But Columbus, remembering the many marks of attachment he had received from him, that his place of dwelling was burnt down, the recent scars of his subjects, and the conformity of his statements to those of the other Indians he had interrogated, refused to believe that he was guilty. Father Boil, who, as a diplomatist, considered he was a thorough judge of human nature, was nettled at the confidence Columbus still reposed in the cacique, notwithstanding these appearances of guilt. The Admiral told him that it was at least prudent to dissemble until his guilt would be fully ascertained, and even if it should turn out that he was really guilty, it were better not be in haste, lest they should, on their landing, have a multitude of enemies to encounter; and that it would be more prudent to retard the punishment of the crime, and then render it more terrible.

Guacanagari gave the Admiral, as presents, eight marks and a half of gold, a coronet of gold, three calabashes full of gold-dust, and a cap encircled with precious stones, and thought himself outdone in munificence when presented

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with some Venetian mirrors, hawks' bells, and copper ornaments; — for the Indians preferred copper to gold.

At the departure of the Admiral, the cacique, notwithstanding his lameness, accompanied him to the ships. The sight of these numerous vessels struck him with astonishment. Hitherto he had never seen only two caravels, of middling size, at the first voyage of Columbus; now he was on board a very large vessel, which appeared to command the rest of the squadron. The cattle, asses, sheep, swine, and goats were wonders to him, but the Andalusian horses struck him with amazement. He noticed some Carib prisoners, whose chains had not subdued their fierceness; he contemplated them with fear and shuddering, even though they were in chains.

His attention was more agreeably arrested in another part of the vessel. Among the ten women who had been delivered from Carib captivity, and who were installed on board the *Gracious Mary*, was a young female distinguished above her companions by a queenly loftiness of air and manner, and whom they called Doña Catalina. Guacanagari addressed her some words of courtesy, with tender looks of sympathy. Notwithstanding the difference of the dialects they spoke, they understood each other fully, and entered into an agreement in the presence of all, without anybody suspecting it.

The Admiral had a collation prepared for the cacique, gave him marks of friendship and confidence as in former times, and told him that he intended settling near him and building houses. Guacanagari expressed much satisfaction at the idea, but observed that the situation, on account of its humidity, was unhealthy, which was indeed the case.

Columbus spoke to him of God, of Jesus Christ, trying to induce him to become a Christian, and desired he would wear suspended from his neck a medal of the Blessed Virgin until he would be baptized. But when the cacique understood that it was a symbol of the religion of the Christians, he refused it. It was only through the irresist-

ible entreaties of Columbus that he was induced to accept of this sign of a worship against which he had become prejudiced by the gross licentiousness of the garrison. Still, notwithstanding his desire to please the Admiral, he appeared to be ill at ease. Father Boil found, in this circumstance, a confirmation of his suspicions, and counselled anew to have him arrested. Columbus would not consent to it; something inexplicable assured him of the innocence of his guest.

Guacanagari, without comprehending exactly what was going on, saw plainly, from the cold and reserved air of the Spaniards, that they were no longer the same to him as in the first voyage of the Admiral, and that Columbus alone was always good,—always worthy of reverence. He asked permission to return to land before sunset.

The next day, the natives were seen in large numbers on the shore. A messenger from the cacique came to inquire of the Admiral when he was going to sail, and was informed that it would be the following day. At a later hour the brother of Guacanagari came on board the *Gracious Mary*, under the pretext of bartering some gold. Avoiding the presence of the interpreter, Diego Colon, he spoke to the Indian women, and especially to the beautiful Catalina, to whom he conveyed a message from the king, his brother. About midnight Catalina gave the signal to her companions; they noiselessly let themselves down from the side of the vessel into the sea, and swam bravely for the shore, which was three miles off. A blazing light on the shore was the beacon which love had provided for the fugitives. With all their precautions they were overheard by the watch, and the alarm was raised. During the time necessary for manning the boats, they had got the advance, so that they reached the land safely before the boats could come up to them. Four of them were retaken on the beach, but the high-spirited beauty Catalina made good her escape into the forest.

When it was day, Columbus sent to Guacanagari to de-

mand back the fugitives. The officer charged with the message found neither the cacique nor any of his subjects. His residence was silent and deserted. All had departed, taking with them their effects, provisions and utensils. This desertion confirmed the suspicions of the guilt of Guacanagari.* Columbus alone refused to condemn him.

SECTION III.

The president of the topographical commission reported that a suitable site, near a convenient port, had been found. While they were directing their course to it, the weather changed and became unfavorable. It cost more pains to go back thirty leagues than it did to come all along from Spain. Yet this contrariety had its advantages. They were constrained to put into a harbor that abounded with fish, and were struck with the advantages of the place. It was provided with an excellent port, and was near two rivers, watering a soil that was inexhaustibly fertile. At a short distance were stones fit for building. The plateau was protected on one side by an impervious forest, and on the other by a natural rampart of rocks, which commanded the port, and which could easily be rendered impregnable. They decided to go no farther. Doctor Chanca considered "this place the best situated in the world," and thought that Providence had conducted the fleet there, in seeking refuge from bad weather.

It was with unspeakable pleasure that the greater part of the Spaniards, strangers to a sea-faring life, took possession of the verdant soil, the odoriferous shades, and the unknown fruit of this country, where, in trees always green, birds built their nests as they do in spring-time in Europe.

The provisions, guns and ammunition, and implements of every kind, were stored in buildings that were immediately constructed.

* Petri Martyris Anghieri, *Decad.* i, lib. ii.

A plan of the city was formed, and, when Columbus had determined its proportions, he laid, in the name of the Most Holy Trinity, the foundation-stone of it, giving it the sweet name of Isabella.

In his estimation, the service of God surpassing all other considerations, the first edifice that was erected should be the church. It was pushed with such activity that, on the sixth of January, the anniversary of the entrance of the Sovereigns into Granada, High Mass was solemnly celebrated in it by the Vicar-Apostolic, assisted by Father Juan Perez de Marchena and the twelve religious who accompanied Father Boil.

Only three public buildings were built of stone. The houses of private persons were built of wood, plaister, or earth. Everybody tried to have a dwelling for himself, so that, in a few weeks, Isabella had the appearance of a small city. At the same time, vegetables and cereal crops grew with great rapidity. The Indians, whose fears were removed by the affable countenance of Columbus, were earnest in aiding the Spaniards in their labors, and considered themselves handsomely paid in receiving some European trifles.

In order to hasten the completion of Isabella, the first city of the Spaniards in the New World, Columbus, as it were, multiplied himself, being almost everywhere at the same time. This incessant fatigue undermined his strength, and he fell sick, without his mind losing its vigor. While he watched at the founding of the colony, he studied the means of securing its prosperity. He often inquired of the natives respecting the interior of the island, and sent a caravel to explore it. He became persuaded that Isabella was the natural outlet of the gold mines of Cibao, distant three days' journey. The joy of this news was lessened by the invasion of a *quasi* epidemic disease, under the ravages of which the stoutest hearts of the expedition became discouraged.

CHAPTER III.

Europeans disappointed in their Hopes. — Fraud of the Purveyors of the Marine. — Conspiracy against Columbus. — Revolt. — Enmity of the Vicar-Apostolic towards Columbus.

SECTION I.

THE hidalgos who had come out with so much enthusiasm to seek for gold, did not know how rude the life of a mariner is. The rations, consisting of salted meat and fish, and mouldy biscuit, did not agree with their constitutions. The fatigues consequent on the building of their houses, and other causes, but particularly the alternations of heat and wet weather, produced deadly fevers.

As the Admiral was somewhat ill at the time when things were put on board at Cadiz, he could not himself inspect the provisions, animals, and munitions. It appears that Juan de Soria, the controller of the marine, did not neglect availing himself of this circumstance. At the unshipping at Isabella, it was found that the greater part of the provisions were damaged, or in insufficient quantity. The better part of the wine had leaked, on account of the casks being badly bound. The supply of medicines fell far short of the order given by the physician-in-chief. The superb chargers which the Admiral had reviewed at Seville were replaced by mean horses. We can now conceive the instinctive repugnance of Columbus towards the controller-general, Juan de Soria, and why the latter was the irreconcilable enemy of the man who knew his frauds. Thus, in the first expedition of a royal fleet to the New World, we

already find the immoral speculations and fraudulent connivances with which the administration of the marine has been so often reproached.

The frauds of the bureau of Seville aggravated, then, the condition of the colony from its commencement. Cruel disappointments and discouragements were experienced. Still, the sailors, soldiers, and laborers, accustomed to fatigues, continued the works so perseveringly, that by the end of January a large number of houses were erected, and the Admiral had the city surrounded with a wall of dry stones, in Arabian fashion.

Desiring to avail himself of the favorable weather for the return of the fleet to Spain, and to procure more provisions, the Admiral sent back all the ships except five, which were destined for the colony, as well as for making further discoveries. He placed the fleet under the command of Antonio de Torres, who sailed in the *Gracious Mary*. He intrusted to Torres a memorial, which the latter was to present personally to the Sovereigns, with some specimens of native gold.

This precious document, which has descended to us with the marginal annotations of the Sovereigns, is the best testimony of the eminent superiority of Columbus in matters of government and public administration. We perceive in it, under the veil of human prudence, that faith in Providence which was the basis of his character and the secret of his sublime aspirations. It is seen that, from minute financial details to great social influences, nothing escaped him. No mind was more positive than his, or more accurately practical, notwithstanding the poetic grandeur of his views.

The fleet sailed on the second of February, 1494. By order of the Admiral, it carried the Indians (men, women, and children) he had taken on the Caribbean islands to Spain, in order that, becoming Christians, they may come back and serve as interpreters. The Caribs, it appeared to him, would be of great utility in this respect, because,

coursing all the islands of the archipelago, they were familiar with their different dialects.

As soon as the fleet had quitted Hispaniola, great disquietude began to possess those ardent and frivolous minds, strangers to every kind of labor, who had attached themselves to Columbus, thinking they could amass fortunes amid the flowers and delights of these unknown regions. Reality now stared them in the face. Many of them expressed their disappointment and discontentment to each other, and sought to leave the exile they had imprudently imposed on themselves. The metallurgist, Firman Zedo, an ignorant and blabbing man, disgusted with his sojourn in the island, decried it to his heart's content. He insisted that it contained no gold, that the shining specimens which the Admiral was pleased to decorate with the name of gold were only lamellas, or grains of mica, or of a matter that only resembled gold. He declared that the wrought gold brought by the natives was the fruit of hereditary savings; that the sources were entirely exhausted, and that nothing could be obtained from them to repay for the search. His declarations dispelled the charm. The discontented, to become seditious, only needed a leader. They found one in the person of Bernal Diaz de Pisa, the lieutenant of the paymaster-general, a functionary appointed by the Sovereigns.

Taking advantage of the sickness of Columbus, he determined to institute a kind of inquiry regarding the conduct of the Admiral, and to show by numerous witnesses that he deceived the Sovereigns by a delusive report; and that there was nothing but ruin and death to be expected in this island, full of impenetrable thickets, and inhabited by a naked and sottish race, just the people fit for such a country. Bernal Diaz and his abettors were to take possession of the buildings at night; but at the very moment when the plot was going to be executed, the Admiral, suddenly restored to health, and informed of the evil design, had the chief conspirator immediately arrested; on his person were found the proofs of his crime, written by his own hand, together

with the names of his accomplices. The Admiral could immediately have had him judged according to the rigor of the laws, but he limited himself to securing his person, and sending him back to Spain, with an account of the proceedings, in order that the Sovereigns themselves may judge his case. The clemency of Columbus has been admired by historians. Irving cannot refrain from saying: "The Admiral conducted himself with great moderation. Several of the inferior mutineers were punished according to the degree of their culpability, but not with the severity which their offence deserved." *

Still, notwithstanding the generous forbearance of Columbus, this chastisement, so conformable to law and justice, and to the exceptional position in which he was placed, became the source of accusations and implacable recriminations. Those who, perhaps, would have been the victims of the revolt, became the detractors of the Admiral, whose firmness, tempered with clemency, saved them from ruin. Castilian pride could not bear to see hidalgos punished by a foreigner, and he a Genoese. The malcontents felt that they were sustained at Court by their families. Columbus, alone, a stranger, and now absent, must succumb.

To guard against any recurrence of such another attempt, Columbus ordered the guns and munitions to be taken from four of the vessels, and put into the principal one, which was devoted to him. Then, leaving the five ships to the command of his brother, Don Diego, to attend to the malcontents, he advanced to the mountains of Cibao. There, according to what the Indians had told, there were mines of gold. The very name of the king of these mountains was of good omen. He called himself Caonabo, which means "Lord of the Golden House."

In order to strike the natives with astonishment in his march, he chose the most vigorous of his men and horses,

* Washington Irving. *History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*. Book VI., c. viii.

and set out with the greatest order, surrounded by his principal officers, at the head of his cavalry, which supported a regiment of about eighty men, divided into sections. He maintained in his little army the strictest order, so as to excite wonder at a distance by the regularity of their movements. After having gone over the rolling ground which lies between the sea-shore and the mountains, they came to a narrow and rugged defile or path, which the cavalry could not pass. It was the only route that led directly to Cibao. The exuberant vegetation, and the ruggedness of the way, arrested the progress of the expeditionary corps.

At the request of the Admiral, a number of high-spirited young cavaliers, who had learned the service of pioneers under Queen Isabella, set bravely to work, and in a few hours opened a road for the troops. In honor of the gallant cavaliers who had effected it, it was called "El Puerto to de los Hidalgos," or The Gentlemen's Pass.

This obstacle having been overcome, the army, from the top of the mountain, beheld a majestic plain, extending as far as the sight could reach, watered by several rivers, which, in their serpentine meanderings, diffused freshness and life on their borders, where the luxuriant vegetation of a tropical clime lavished its indescribable richness. The art of the natives coming to the aid of nature, converted this abode into an enchanted garden, interspersed with parterres, orchards, groves, meadows, leaf-covered bowers, and light habitations.

At the sight of this enchanting view, Columbus stopped his horse, and made the column halt, in order to gaze undisturbed at the scene, and to raise his heart to the Author of these beauties, and thank him publicly for being permitted to behold so magnificent a scene. He named it the *Vega Real*, or Royal Plain.

In approaching the habitations, the trumpets were sounded, the banners displayed, and the tambours beat the charge. Seized with fear and wonder, some of the natives came before these powerful strangers, to gaze at

them with respect, and offer them the fruit, provisions, and gold they possessed; while others, scared, took to flight, or shut themselves up in their cabins, thinking themselves safe behind their barricades of reeds. The Admiral forbade forcing the fragile asylums, or disturbing their inhabitants. He reached the banks of the Yague, a small river, the mouth of which he had seen in his first voyage, and which he had named the Golden River.

For two days, the royal standard of Castile was carried among numerous populations. Afterwards, they came to a chain of lofty mountains. It was the district of Cibao, the domain of the "Lord of the Golden House."

On Saturday, the fifteenth of March, it became necessary to open another route for the cavalry. The next day the expeditionary corps ascended with ardor the rugged slope. Gradually the vegetation became less abundant. On the borders of rivulets and rivers they beheld only pines and cabbage-trees; besides, the rugged surface presented only vexatious undulations, intersected with rocks. Still the Spaniards looked with joy on these things, because they saw particles of gold in the bottoms of all the streams, which indicated that there were mines in the vicinity.

On his route the Admiral found some unknown plants, and collected some amber and *lapis lazuli*; he also discovered a metalliferous vein, showing the presence of copper. He resolved to continue his explorations no farther, but to secure the advantages he had gained by a fortress, which would protect the communications between the mountains of Cibao and the port of Isabella. He chose a suitable site on a rocky plateau, which the Yague, with its pure and fresh waters, almost surrounded, forming a natural defence for it. The climate was salubrious. A born architect, the Admiral planned a fortress for this place. From the height of the ramparts, which were constructed of wood and stone, the eye beheld a delightful savanna. He called this fortress St. Thomas, because of the incredulity of the Spaniards in regard to the gold of this region,

until they had beheld it with their eyes, and touched it with their hands, in the beds of the rivulets.

Columbus, after having traced the route which was to connect Isabella and Fort St. Thomas, appointed fifty-six chosen men and some horses to the latter place, under the command of Pedro Margarit, the father of a family, and destitute of fortune, whom he himself had recommended to the Sovereigns, — a circumstance to be noted, inasmuch as this officer became afterwards one of the principal causes of the misfortunes of the colony and of the troubles of the Admiral.

SECTION II.

After Columbus returned to Isabella, he had scarcely recovered from his fatigues when he received a message from Pedro Margarit, informing him that the cacique Caonabo was preparing to besiege the fortress. Without being much alarmed, because he knew the timidity of the Indians, their fear of horses and of fire-arms, the Admiral still sent it a reinforcement of seventy men, with an additional supply of provisions. Then he set about having the city of Isabella completed.

The fertility of the soil appeared incredible. Leguminous seeds germinated in three days, and arrived at maturity in three weeks. The thirtieth of March, — Easter Sunday, — a laborer presented Columbus with some ears of wheat which he had sown at the end of January. They were certain of obtaining two crops in the year. Still, this hope would not suffice for present needs. The fever raged to a great extent. The able-bodied laborers, overtasked, became disheartened, and did but little work, while the hidalgos, wrapped up in their pride, yielded to bitter regrets, and cursed the Admiral and the Discovery. Without being of any utility for the colony, they consumed the provisions, which began to decline visibly. The greater part of the meats was spoiled, the medicines were nearly used, and

there remained but a small quantity of wine. The wheat alone offered some resource ; but it was necessary to use it with economy.

The Admiral thought of distributing in the interior of the island the troops, consisting of four hundred infantry and sixteen cavalry, in order to leave only the workmen and the sick in Isabella. In the mean time, he commenced putting on short allowance all the members of the colony, without exception of rank or person. He was himself the first person to submit to the common law. This measure of safety appeared insupportable to certain persons. The flour being exhausted, the rations were distributed in wheat in its crude state. Everybody was then obliged to grind his own wheat with a hand-mill. But there were not mills enough ; besides, the volunteers, the hidalgos, and those who, accustomed to easy lives, had come to the island to amass fortunes, refused submitting to the required labor. The sick and the convalescent could not of course do it ; and the common laborers, obliged to do it alone, in addition to their other work, became sick, or feigned to be so.

Columbus considered it would not be just to have all the weight of this calamity fall on the poor laborers. The erection of a public mill, and the completion of a canal, which he wished to pass through the centre of the city, were the only means to remedy these inconveniences. He ordered that labor at these two works of public utility should be obligatory, under severe penalties. The necessity of the case justified this severity ; for this collective and temporary labor would, in a short time, render irregular daily labor unnecessary, and, without much effort, would give bread to all in a convenient manner. But Castilian pride revolted at the idea. The employés, the men of the royal household, and the hidalgos, felt profoundly humiliated to be obliged to work at manual labor.

The Christian soul of Columbus, arising above the considerations of rank and prerogatives, maintained the principle of equality before the law of danger and that of public

safety. All healthy persons, distributed in companies, had to do their share of the work, and the chastisement of the refractory secured the execution of the measures. No consideration could move him, and his salutary inflexibility was a grievance which the Castilians would not pardon. But he gained his point, and the event justified the sagacity of his course.

Columbus laid down, as a principle, this maxim of the religious of the early ages of the Church: "He who does not work does not deserve food." To noble idlers and lazy self-seekers he presented the choice of work or retrenchment of rations. For this he was accused of cruelty, — a charge which the Vicar-Apostolic invested with the appearance of truth. The latter, without perhaps meaning to go so far, instilled into the minds of the disaffected the spirit of disobedience and revolt.

Here a short explanation in regard to Father Boïl, and his evangelical labors, becomes necessary.

Father Bernard Boïl, a native of Catalonia, and a Benedictine monk of Montserrat, was in high credit at Court, for his knowledge, his ability, his acquaintance with diplomatic affairs, his shrewdness, and the fertility of his intellect; moreover, his moral character was irreproachable. He had not come to the Indies of his own accord, moved by the spirit of his vocation, and had not sought the apostolate.

Nominated by the Sovereigns to this Vicariate-Apostolic, he obeyed, in embarking for it, as if he were going on a mission of diplomacy, — a matter for which he had a natural aptitude. His choice of the greater part of his fellow-laborers, partook of that want of divine election which was the case with himself. Among those he took with him, some were really qualified to evangelize the poor idolaters; but the greater number of them, better qualified for the quiet regularity of a cloister, found themselves without power or influence in their new mode of life. They had no zeal or facility for learning the language of the natives,

and speaking to them of God. They edified nobody, they consoled nobody, and they did not even console themselves for their estrangement; but passed their time in criticising the conduct of the Admiral, and in sighing for their native country.

From the time of his arrival in the colony, Father Boil, until then a great admirer of Columbus, was opposed to him on the subject of the supposed complicity of Guacanagari in the massacre of the Spaniards at the fortress. He was mortified that the Admiral should seem to believe rather in the savage than in his own penetration as a diplomatist. Hence the enmity of the Benedictine against Columbus.

While the pious brother Juan Bergognon, a religious of the Order of St. Francis, and brother Roman Pane, called the "poor hermit," of the Order of St. Jerome, were engaged in studying the language of Marcorix, — the dialect which was most generally understood throughout the island, — the Superior of the Mission, disgusted with the poor Indians, wrote to the Queen to acknowledge the uselessness of his sojourn among them, on account of the difficulties of their language, and requesting her to order his return.

In spite of the opposition to which we have referred, the needed public works were completed, through the firmness of Columbus. He sent the garrison of Isabella into the interior of the island, to explore it thoroughly; to show the natives the banner of Castile, and the power of its subjects; to find the beds of gold, all the riches and all the resources of the country, and its strategetic conveniences. This measure presented to the colony the advantage of causing its provisions to last for a longer time, and of accustoming the soldiers to live on the diet of the natives. The Admiral then sent all the troops to Pedro Margarit, under the conduct of Alonzo de Ojedo, who was to take charge of the command of the whole army, while Margarit was to have that of Fort St. Thomas.

CHAPTER IV.

Voyage to Cuba. — Discovery of Jamaica. — The Queen's Gardens. — Periodical Storms. — He desires to crush the Power of the Caribs. — Columbus falls into a Lethargy. — Bull of Partition. — Treaty of Tordesillas. — Wonderful Firmness of Pope Alexander VI.

SECTION I.

IN order to follow more easily the first footsteps of the Castilians and the operations of Columbus in Hispaniola, we will briefly mention its political and territorial divisions.

Five kings, or grand caciques, each having under his orders a certain number of lords, or subaltern caciques, — a kind of vassals, — reigned over the island of Hayti, which the Admiral named Hispaniola. These five kings were, Guarionex, Caonabo, Behechio, Guacanagari, and Guayacoa.

Guarionex, descended from the most illustrious stock, governed the north-east part of the island, in which was comprised the magnificent plain, which was called *Vega Real*; it was in his territory that Isabella was built, without his permission.

Guacanagari reigned over the north-east, from Artibonite to beyond Monte Christo.

Guayacoa occupied the most eastern parts: those that were most exposed to the attacks of the Caribs. His subjects were better armed than the other islanders, and knew how to defend themselves with courage.

Behechio possessed the greater part of the island, — that which extended from Antibonite westwards to Cape Tibu-

ron, and embraced in its limits the salt lake of Xaragua, for a long time the theme of mysterious stories.

Caonabo reigned over the mountainous parts, from the heights of Cibao to the southern shore. Being of Caribbean origin, his genealogy was unknown. Thrown on the island by mere accident, a romantic amour detained him there. Having become a soldier, he put the crown on his own head. His military talents secured his power. The neighboring kings feared his enmity, or sought an alliance with him.

Each of these grand caciques had under him some secondary caciques, who were sovereigns *de facto* in their respective districts. Save the populations of the east, who were exposed to the incursions of the Caribs, and the tribes under the warrior-king, Caonabo, the natives were of a timid and pacific disposition. The delightfulness of the climate, the facility of living without labor, a hereditary apathy, and a propensity for vague reveries, rendered every kind of corporal labor insupportable to them; and the more so because their diet, almost exclusively vegetable, hardly allowed them to prosecute any heavy labors.

After having fortified Pedro Margarit with admirable instructions, — comprising, foreseeing and counselling everything; the places to be traversed, the observations to be made, the means of obtaining provisions, of rendering justice among the natives, of winning their affection and leading them to Christianity, — the Admiral provided for the safety of the city, which was left without a garrison, and prepared for the continuation of his discoveries, not wishing to be forestalled by Portugal. To act in his absence, he instituted a council, composed of Father Boil, of Pedro Hernandez, of Alonzo Sanchez de Carvajal, and of Juan de Luxan, under the presidency of his brother, Don Diego Columbus. The choice of Father Boil will excite no surprise, when it is remembered the Admiral never revenged an outrage done to himself; that he placed the public good before every consideration; and that, notwithstanding his

difference of opinion with the Vicar-Apostolic, he honored in him his official character; besides, he could not ignore his capability, and perhaps he was disposed to give him, as occasion may require, a participation in the official affairs of the colony.

SECTION II.

The Admiral chose from among the five vessels remaining at the port of Isabella the three smallest caravels, — the *Niña*, the *San Juan*, and the *Cordera*, — manned by crews that were known to him. The *Niña* was commanded by Alonzo Medel, of Palos. The *Cordera* belonged to a man from Palos, Cristobal Perez Niño. The *San Juan* had as captain a mariner from Malaga, but the crew were from Palos or its environs.

The Admiral put his pavilion on board the *Niña*, that little caravel that had carried him back to Europe; and, changing her name, he had her called the *Santa Clara* (the *St. Clare*), in memory of the first daughter of the Seraphic order. He took with him a few, but chosen ship's officers — the astronomer, Father Juan Perez de Marchena; the physician-in-chief, Doctor Chanca, and other distinguished characters.

On the twenty-fourth of April, the Admiral left the port of Isabella, and directed his course to the west. He dropped anchor in a port belonging to the possessions of Guacanagari, thinking that cacique would come and renew their former relations. He wished it the more, because the munificent hospitality of that prince might be of great advantage to the colony, which was threatened with a dearth of provisions; but, at the sight of the caravels, Guacanagari retired to the woods. This circumstance came anew to confirm the prejudice entertained against him. Still, the Admiral did not condemn him. The cacique may be afraid that the treasure of his heart, the beautiful Catalina, may be taken from him.

The Admiral set sail the next day, with changeable winds.

At last, after four days' rough sailing, he doubled the cape he had seen in his first voyage, and which he had named Alpha and Omega. It is at present called Maysi. Afterwards, steering southward, he came to the admirable harbor of Guantanamo. Having gone ashore with the staff-officer and the interpreter, Diego Colon, they came to a place where preparations were being made for a sumptuous feast before fires that were abandoned. There they found great quantities of fish, utias, and guanas, cooked or cooking. The Spaniards were rejoiced at finding this bounteous feast, to which they helped themselves. The natives had concealed themselves at their approach. At length they beheld about seventy of the islanders on the top of a little hill, gazing at them with awe and amazement. By friendly signs, one of them was induced to come near them. As the Lucayan dialect was better understood on this coast than at Hispaniola, it was easy to dispel his apprehensions. In a short time his fellow-countrymen approached the strangers with gentleness and veneration. They were preparing for their cacique a banquet, which he was going to give a neighboring cacique; and they cooked the fish to preserve it during the transportation. The ravages which had been made of their provisions by the Spaniards gave them no concern; for, they said, one night's fishing would replace the loss; but Columbus, unwilling to have their labor for nothing, distributed among them some small European objects, which filled them with joy. Shaking hands with the sailors, they parted, mutually well pleased.

The next day he continued his course westward, in sight of the coast, which he observed with attention. His caravels were followed by an innumerable throng of Indians in canoes, who came to offer them fruit, cassava bread, fish, and calabashes filled with excellent water. Like the other islanders, they believed the white men descended from heaven. The Admiral gave them hawks' bells and other trinkets, which they considered of inestimable value. On inquiring of them where they got gold, they uniformly

pointed to the south. Columbus then directed his course in that direction.

At daybreak on Sunday, he beheld the blue summits of lofty mountains. It was the Island of Jamaica, which he did not reach until after a day's sailing. The island appeared to him of marvellous beauty.

As they approached land, an armada of canoes, manned with painted warriors, brandishing their arms, and uttering fearful yells, sallied forth from the numerous creeks to oppose their landing. Some presents calmed this fury, and the squadron cast anchor in a port to which Columbus gave the name of *Santa Gloria*, from the ravishing beauty of the surrounding country. Afterwards he sought a convenient place for calking the *Niña*, as she leaked considerably. Here also another flotilla opposed his landing. Notwithstanding the savage yells, and some arrows directed against the caravels, the Admiral entered the harbor, which, from its commodiousness, he named the *Puerto Bueno*.

Needing quietness to have the calking done, and to take in a supply of fresh water, he reflected that it would be well to let the natives see they were not afraid of them. Some boats, well manned and armed, were accordingly sent towards the shore. These coming close to the beach, let fly a volley of arrows from their cross-bows, which wounded seven or eight of the Indians. A dog which found his way into the party, seeing them flee, pursued them with fury, biting them on the hinder parts while they fled.* The next day, the caciques of that region sent envoys with profers of peace and amity; afterwards, there came charged with provisions canoes whose sterns and prows were ornamented with painting and carving. These canoes, formed from the trunks of single trees, were of colossal proportions. One that was measured by the Admiral was ninety-six feet

*The incredible success obtained by this dog gave origin to the idea of employing these animals as auxiliaries in the wars against the Indians.

long, and eight feet broad. Here the quality of the food was better than in the other islands; the fruit was better flavored, and the plants had more aroma in them.

The Admiral took possession of the island in the accustomed form; erected a cross on its soil with the appropriate prayers, and, putting it under the patronage of the apostle of Spain, gave it the name of *Santiago* (St. James). In three days the repairs of the caravel were completed; and Columbus, after having sailed by the coast twenty-five leagues without finding the least trace of gold, directed his course to Cuba, to know whether it was an island or a continent. He thought he could settle the question, when he would have coasted it some fifty or sixty leagues.

On the eighteenth of May, he came near a large cape, which he named *Cabo de la Cruz* (Cape of the Holy Cross). This coast, which hitherto extended to the west, suddenly formed an immense bend, which swept to the north. A tempest, such as no European ever experienced in these latitudes, put them in great peril; when it passed off, they found themselves in the midst of rocks or keys, and sand-banks, between which they made a league, visibly guided by Providence. A countless number of small islands, some low and sandy, others elevated and covered with verdure, and of a charming aspect, formed a kind of labyrinth. Not being able to give each of them a particular name, Columbus called them collectively the "Queen's Gardens." His officers besought him to quit these parts, where to recede was no less dangerous than to advance. They were in continual danger of running aground.

Some phenomena of a particular character engaged the attention of the Admiral. The variableness of the weather presented in its caprices a kind of periodic regularity, which was calculated to surprise the great observer of nature. Every morning the wind came from the east, — every evening from the west; at the approach of night heavy clouds gathered in the west, increasing as they came to the zenith, and sending forth sheets of lightning, followed by peals of

thunder. But, as soon as the moon rose, the whole menacing mass would soon disappear. This atmospheric singularity, and the immense number of little islands, inclined Columbus to think he was in the archipelago of five thousand islets, situated at the extremity of India, spoken of by Marco Paulo and Mandeville; and, although the caravels touched ground more than once, notwithstanding the precautions of the pilots, he was unwilling to depart from this country until he would know how the matter stood.

These islands, for the most part, were inhabited. In the largest of them, which the Admiral named the *Santa Maria*, they found houses, which the inhabitants fled from on their approach, some geese, some herons, and four dumb dogs, which, it was afterwards ascertained, they fattened for their grand entertainments.*

The Admiral spent nearly a month in navigating this dangerous archipelago. During these operations they descended frequently on the coast of Cuba, to know the extent of that country, and whether it was an island or a continent. At last he went ashore himself, in order to solve this geographical problem.

Some of the natives said Cuba was an island, but almost all agreed that it had no end. Some fishermen, questioned on the subject, said it extended endlessly to the west. The embarrassment of Columbus soon increased. In the region now arrived at the interpreter could not be understood, and it became necessary to resort to the language of signs. This imperfect mode of expressing ideas led the Admiral into an error that was almost inevitable. On the one hand, he understood that in the west there reigned a cacique named Magon, or Mango, wearing a long robe; on the other hand, an archer of the expedition, who had been hunting in the woods, saw a man clothed in white, like the almoner of the *Santa Clara*; afterwards he saw two others, and, further on, he counted thirty.† He considered it prudent to return

* Fernando Columbus. *Histoire de l'Admiral*, chap. LV.

† Viewed at a certain angle, white cranes could produce this illusion.

hastily to the ships. The Admiral immediately despatched two parties of armed men in quest of these people clothed in white, but one of these parties could not advance more than half a league, on account of the thickness of the forests; and the other, which was to go in a different direction by the shore, perceiving on the sands the recent footprints of some monstrous animals with claws,* hastened back also. These circumstances, collated with the new atmospheric changes he experienced, and the accounts of travellers about the country of Mangu, or Mangon, as well as the traditions about the Grand Khan, whose states extended to the ocean, persuaded Columbus that he had arrived at or near the extremity of India.

He then continued his navigation to the north-west, finding new groups of small islands, and observing, on his right, the large island of *Pines*. Thinking that from the latter the Gospel would be spread among the small archipelagos, he named it *Evangelista*. He noticed the sudden direction the coast took to the south, — a new circumstance which served to confirm him in his conjectures, from its conformity with what had been written by travellers. Again, he was informed by natives that there was no known limit to this coast, even if pursued during more than twenty days' travel. The conformity of these reports, and coincident circumstances, changed his doubts into certainty. In order to forestall Portugal in any attempts she may make, the Admiral considered it important to take possession of the *terra firma* as soon as possible, and accordingly proceeded to make a formal and authentic record of the discovery of the continent of Cuba, which was considered the commencement of the Indies.

There were in the three caravels fifty seamen, among whom were some pilots of high reputation, and persons skilled in cosmography. None of them had any doubt on the subject, and all knew the data upon which Columbus

* They were undoubtedly alligators.

founded his conjectures. They were firmly persuaded that Cuba formed the commencement of the Indies. From these circumstances Columbus conceived the bold project of returning to Spain in a route by Asia and the Mediterranean.

God alone, and the angels, knew at that time the form of the new continent, the immensity of the Pacific Ocean, and the distance that separated Cuba from the coasts of China and of the Indian Archipelago. The error of Columbus, inevitable as it was, and from which he could not have been exempt save by divine revelation, serves to show the fertility of his genius and the boldness of his inductions. In his plan glitters the first idea of circumnavigating the globe. Doubling the Aurea Chersonesus and the peninsula of Malacca, he might emerge into the seas frequented by the Arabians, and anciently known by the Roman merchants. He might pass Tapobrana, and, continuing on, arrive at the shores of the Red Sea. Thence he might go by land to Jerusalem and the other holy places, — the constant object of his solicitude and of his heroic ardor. Then he could take shipping at Joppa, and return to Spain, traversing the whole length of the Mediterranean. But the want of provisions, the shattered state of his caravels, and the remonstrances of his sailors, obliged him to turn back.

SECTION III.

In recompense for his fatigues during this cruise, the contemplator of Creation was invited to witness grand natural spectacles. In proportion as he retired to the deep and clear waters of the coast of Cuba, scenes of animated nature vivified the solitudes of the ocean. One day they came to where the sea was almost covered with tortoises. The next day flights of cormorants and cranes would fill the horizon; and the following day, the whole air would be filled with clouds of butterflies, until the evening shower would dispel them.

In continuing his route, he reëntered the waters that had

formerly alarmed his men. He found the sea thick and white, which he had crossed before arriving at Evangelista. The heavy and turbid waves were so vividly white that they dazzled the sight. The caravels could make but little sail, and had to make frequent soundings. To this local phenomenon there was soon added another, not less annoying to the crews, than very curious to an inquiring mind. The sea became as black as ink, so that nothing could be seen. Any other heart than that of Columbus would have quailed in the presence of such a transition. At length, on the sixth of July, they landed at the extremity of the gulf formed by the jutting out of Cape Santa Cruz. The Indians of the country hastened to bring them provisions, — a matter they much needed.

To thank God for the signal favors granted them among so many perils, Columbus had an altar erected at the nearest shady place, and mass solemnly celebrated.

During the ceremony, an aged cacique, venerable in spite of his nudity, came near, observing with attention everything that was done. He perceived that the ceremony must be of a sacred and religious character. After Columbus had finished his thanksgiving, the old man saluted him, offering him a basket of fine fruit, which he held in his hand; and seating himself by him, addressed him in the following terms, through the interpreter Diego, whose dialect he understood: “It is meet and just to render thanks to God for the blessings He vouchsafes us. It appears to be your manner, and that of your people, thus to render Him homage; that is all well. I have been informed that some time ago you came with your forces to these countries, which until then were unknown. Remember, I beseech and implore you, that the souls of men, on leaving the body, enter on two ways: one, leading to a noisome and dismal place, covered with darkness, prepared for those who have been unjust and cruel to their fellow-men; the other, pleasant and delightful, for such as have loved and promoted peace among men. Beware, then, if you believe yourself

to be a mortal man, of doing injury to anybody, and bear in mind that everybody will be rewarded or punished according to his works."

Columbus was moved and consoled by these words. Until then he had never noticed in the Indians anything that indicated a clear idea of a future life. The Admiral blessed God for having vouchsafed this light to men of good-will, secluded in these distant regions. This old cacique reminded him of one of those just men of the primitive law, dwelling, like Raguel, in idolatrous countries. Columbus answered, through the interpreter, that he came from the extremity of the ocean, sent by his Sovereigns to teach the true religion, to cause justice to reign, to subdue the inhuman Caribs, and force them to peace, and to protect pacific nations.

The old cacique was overjoyed at these words, and could not refrain from shedding tears. Then, to his great astonishment, the interpreter told him of the grandeur of the monarchs of Spain. Conceiving the highest idea of the strangers, and especially of their chief, he suddenly announced his resolution of following them. Forgetting his years, he desired to traverse the ocean, to behold those things the description of which had excited his curiosity. But his wife and children cast themselves at his feet, imploring him not to quit them: at length he listened to their remonstrances, and consented to remain among his own people.

Columbus remained several days at anchor in the river, which, from the masses celebrated on its banks, he named the *Rio de la Misa*, and the natives brought him abundance of provisions. He had some repairs done to the ships, and had supplies of water, wood, and fresh provisions taken in, and on the sixteenth of July he directed his course to Hispaniola; but, as he was about doubling Cape Santa Cruz, a violent squall struck the ships, and nearly threw them on their beam-ends. Their promptitude alone saved them; fortunately they were able to take in sail immediately, and,

letting go their largest anchors, kept from driving. But the *Santa Clara* was so much damaged by the keys that she leaked on every side, and the utmost exertions of the crew could not prevent the water from gaining on her. To add to their troubles, their stock of provisions began to run out; each man had, per day, only a biscuit and a cup of wine. The Admiral, unwilling to fare better than the others, contented himself with the rations of a sailor. The danger was so great that he wrote to the Queen, in giving an account of this expedition: "God grant that my fatigues may be profitable to His service and that of your Highnesses. Never could self-interest make me expose myself to so many fatigues and perils; not a day passes that I am not every moment exposed to death." The billows burst with so much violence, that they sank the sides of the *Santa Clara* under water. The crew no longer expected any human succor to raise the ship, held down by the weight of the anchors. In the imminence of this impending shipwreck God aided His servant, and enabled him to take shelter in a little cove of Cape Santa Cruz, where the natives brought him abundance of cassava bread, fried fish, fowl, and fruit of every kind.

The Admiral remained here three days, to rest his sailors, and to repair the damages done his ship. The wind continuing contrary for the return to Hispaniola, he stood across for Jamaica, to complete his exploration. There also he was assailed by storms, and his men became quite fatigued.

The wind having changed to the north-east, the Admiral directed his course to Hispaniola. He did this in so unerring a manner, that the next day, the twentieth of August, he arrived at the western cape of the island, which he named *St. Michael*. On the twenty-third a large canoe approached the caravels, having on board a cacique, who said, in a loud voice, in Spanish, "Admiral, Admiral, how could you have conjectured that this cape belonged to Hispaniola?" In truth, he did not know that it did; he,

however, found himself there, come in a straight line, with such precision, that it seemed miraculous.

In reflecting on the character of that impious race who for so many ages had desolated the homes which Providence had prepared for the peace and happiness of its children, and calling to mind their continual violation of the laws of humanity, and their ruthless descents on peaceable populations who shuddered at the sole mention of their name, he resolved to subjugate the whole race, and to make them labor for the advantage of the people they were accustomed to devour. By this act of justice he hoped to win the grateful affections of the islanders for the Christians, whose faith he desired they would ardently embrace. While waiting to see what the Queen would decree in relation to these ferocious savages, he desired, at least, to go with his caravels to the Caribbean archipelago, to search for the haunts of the cannibals, and burn their canoes, to prevent them from continuing longer their depredations. He hoped to be able to make them powerless for evil, and to oblige them to remain in their islands, and cultivate them, in place of their transporting other men there to fatten for their feasting.

After having endured some new storms, on the twenty-fourth of September the Admiral perceived the most eastern cape of Hispaniola, to which he gave the name of the archangel *Raphael*. Notwithstanding the crazed condition of the caravels, the weather becoming calm, he directed his course to the Caribs, whose power he wished to crush. But God, no doubt, willed that His servant, the messenger of peace, the gentle dove, the emblem of spiritual regeneration, should not effect a mission of chastisement, or of vengeful punishment. As soon as they passed the Island of Mona, borne by a favorable wind towards the haunts of the cannibals, the invisible power which until then had sustained him was suddenly withdrawn. Abandoned now to the laws of nature, Columbus was obliged to submit to their rigorous exactions.

It was just five months since he had departed from Hispaniola. For a hundred and fifty consecutive days, his study of nature, his examination of waters and soils, his contemplation of the wonderful works of God, his efforts to reconcile with each other the contradictory statements of the natives to attain some geographical verity, and his prolonged struggle against the elements, maintaining his soul, his intellect, and his body, in a triple activity, exhausted all his forces. The feeling of his responsibility, and the necessity of constantly directing the navigation himself, were too much for his age, his infirmities, his want of nourishment, and his privation of sleep.

All his organs became simultaneously torpid. His brain, as well as his eyes and his limbs, yielded to fatigues that surpassed human endurance. There was a total suspension of all his physical and moral faculties. It was a state of complete lethargy. Were it not for the pulsation of his arteries, and the flexibility of his members, one would have believed his sublime soul had returned to its Creator.

Under these circumstances, the pilots, left to their own counsel, spread their sails for the harbor of Isabella.

SECTION IV.

Two months before the departure of Columbus on his second voyage, Portugal addressed Castile a protestation against the Bulls of the third and fourth of May, 1493, which, it alleged, infringed on the rights with which her Crown was previously invested.

Castile, fearing to see a change in the friendly relations existing with her ally, desired to have the reclamation attentively examined. The thirtieth of July, 1494, Isabella charged Don Guttiere de Toledo, professor in the University of Salamanca, to send her forthwith the masters in astronomy and in geography he would judge most capable, in order that they should confer with the pilots she had assembled.

Meanwhile, Portugal, while addressing herself to Castile, was not inactive in regard to influential members of the Pontifical Court. She used all the resources of her diplomatic art to obtain from the Holy See, under some form, an invalidation, or a retraction, of the Bulls accorded to Spain. But to the importunities and solicitations of John II. the Pope answered, simply, that he had in advance anticipated all contestations in drawing a line of demarkation from one pole to the other, and that his donation was irrevocable. The Court of Spain, having informed the Holy See of the reclamation of Portugal, received from the Pope precisely the same answer.

Still, Portugal did not consider herself defeated. She returned to importuning the Holy See, advancing, as reasons, her priority in maritime discoveries, her pious intentions, and several considerations drawn from geographical science. All were useless; the Pope remained immovable. The Holy Father depended with such confidence on the boundaries fixed by the data furnished by Columbus, that he referred the ambassadors and envoys to the Bulls of the third and fourth of May, 1493.

A circumstance in this controversy, hitherto overlooked by historians, but which, however, shows very plainly the providential character of the papal line of demarkation, deserves to be remarked here.

It appears that the Queen of Castile herself, foreseeing already the possibility of the marriage of the Infanta, her daughter, with the presumptive heir of John II., to prevent every cause of disagreement with her powerful neighbor, was noways averse to consenting that the Pope should revise his Bull of Partition, and modify it so as to be more favorable to Portugal. Isabella considered it a simple matter of course that, at her own request, the Holy See would restrict a privilege solely accorded in her favor. She was so sure of it, that, in writing to Columbus the fifth of September, 1493, she spoke of the amendment of the Bull

as a thing already obtained.* The Queen of Castile joined her entreaties to those of John II. The two parties interested being thus of accord, it was expected that the pretended error of the Bull would be rectified.

But when, in his Bull of Partition, the Holy Father declared that he had made the donation by the spontaneous impulse of his own liberality, without regard to any entreaty, and acting in virtue of his apostolic plenitude, he attested a truth no less formal than it was imposing. So, respecting himself, the incomparable donation, given without any external human impulsion, and in which he seemed the first to recognize the character of a divine favor, the Sovereign Pontiff remained immovable in his determination. He rejected the solicitations and the modifications proposed by Spain, as he had rejected the persisting reclamations and the obsequious supplications of Portugal. His decision remained as inflexible as a divine decree. The Holy Father had pronounced in his quality as Chief of the Church; his word already existed in time as irrevocable as the accomplished and the indefectible. All this is strange and marvellous. In such a case, the greatest saint and the grandest genius, united in the same person, could not have acted better than did Alexander VI. Still, in order to put an end to these complaints, and to show the immutability of his resolution, the Pope issued, on the twenty-sixth of September, a Bull, by which, in confirming his donation to the Sovereigns of Castile, he extended it in place of limiting it. This Bull took its title from its object, and was called, in diplomacy, the "Bull of Extension" (*Bula de Extension*).

From that time, the contest remained between the two Crowns.

The pertinacity of Portugal, and the yielding disposition of Spain, who did not wish to alienate an ally to whom she was going to be still more united by the ties of blood, were such, that with a common accord they signed a treaty in the

* *Coleccion Diplomat.*, num. LXXI.

city of Tordesillas, by which they respectively bound themselves to abide by a boundary that would be agreed on by a learned commission composed of an equal number of Spaniards and of Portuguese, who would be charged with correcting the pretended errors of the Bull.

What was the consequence of the yielding temper of Spain and the jealous ambition of Portugal, and what was the result of the change made in the decision of the Holy See? This deserves notice.

When he sanctioned the calculation made by Columbus, and when he made the partition of the unknown and of the future contingent, in fixing as a line of demarkation the one pointed out by the Revealer of the New World, the Sovereign Pontiff, without saying it, munificently gave Spain the new continent in all the integrity of its extent!

The commission, without regarding the line traced by the Sovereign Pontiff, as if it did not exist, agreed to draw another straight line, running from the Arctic to the Antarctic Pole, and passing three hundred and seventy leagues to the west of the islands of Cape Verd. This was removing the line fixed by the Holy Father two hundred and sixty leagues farther westwards.

Hence it followed, that for having disregarded the apostolate of Christopher Columbus, doubted of the inspired science of the Holy See, considered herself more equitable than the Sovereign Pontiff in regard to the rights of Portugal, and for having dared to correct the Bull, Spain lost her exclusive privilege over the New World; and the vast empire of Brazil was acquired by Portugal.

The pretentious calculations of the commissioners were founded on no cosmographic data; whilst, on the contrary, the line traced by the Sovereign Pontiff pointed out precisely the most appropriate ground for it on the face of the globe, — a ground truly worthy of our serious investigations. Involuntarily struck with this marvellous foresight of the Holy See, the great Humboldt has shown the insignificance of the measures agreed upon by the commission,

who pretended to make a more ingenious or more exact division than that made by Alexander VI. The illustrious Protestant, speaking of the means then resorted to for determining a line of imaginary demarkation, says: "The state of science, and the imperfectness of all the instruments that could serve on sea to measure time or space, did not permit yet, in 1493, the practical solution of so complicated a problem. In this state of things, Pope Alexander VI., in arrogating to himself the right of dividing a hemisphere between two powerful empires, rendered, without knowing it, a signal service to nautical astronomy, and to the physical theory of terrestrial magnetism.*

Noticing, further on, the disdainful silence of the commission on the subject of the papal line of demarkation, Humboldt again remarks: "The lines of the papal demarkation merit being stated exactly, because they are of great weight in the efforts being made to perfect nautical astronomy and the methods of longitude."†

The enemies of the Church, the detractors of the Papacy, while contesting its right to make this astonishing donation, are obliged to acknowledge the magnificence of the remuneration it accorded to the Catholic zeal of Spain.

Whatever may be one's religious faith, and at whatever point of view he may place himself, one fact in this contest must be plain to him: namely, that the Holy See showed more confidence in Columbus than Spain did. The Revealer of the Globe was more justly judged by the Church than by the government to which he devoted himself.

If we examine with impartial minds the documents of this conflict between the two Catholic powers, we cannot avoid having a feeling of wonder, mingled with respect, in seeing how events have justified, at the same time, the foresight, the certitude, and the action of the Holy See. Here the Church acted in the manner of Providence, who, in His

* Humboldt. *Cosmos*, etc., t. II., p. 340.

† *Ibid*, p. 572.

recompenses, always surpasses the expectations of men; for, having presumptuously tried to do better than the Church did, Spain lost the better part of the magnificent donation which was granted her. In order to chastise her pride, God had only to abandon her to herself. The fulfilment of her own desires was her first punishment.

CHAPTER V.

Columbus meets his brother Bartholomew. — Prompt recovery of the Admiral. — He receives the first letter that is sent from Europe. — Supplies received. — Excesses committed in his absence; odious conduct of Pedro Margarit and of Father Boil. — General Conspiracy of the Caciques. — Fidelity of Guacanagari, through regard for Columbus. — Cause of the sterility of the Missions. — Father Boil and Father Boyl.

SECTION I.

WHAT the *Santa Clara* bore on her quarter-deck under the name of “Admiral,” was a motionless body, deprived of all consciousness. The twenty-ninth of September the flotilla entered the longed-for port. The colony rejoiced at its return: five months’ absence led to the fear that it had perished. At length, after a sleep of five days and nights, a voice well known to the heart of the Admiral drew him from his lethargy. In awaking, he found himself in the arms of his brother Bartholomew, of whom he had had no account for more than eight years. His other brother, Diego, also attended to him with the utmost care.

The Admiral was much comforted by this unexpected meeting, and his recovery commenced forthwith; for a disposition so loving and so exquisitely sensitive as that of Columbus, joy of the heart must be the most efficacious remedy. The satisfaction arising from fraternal love proved to be the most salutary kind of medication. Providence had prepared this consoling surprise for His servant. Columbus found in his two brothers a faithful support, at a time when fatigue, treachery, and enmity, freely stirred

up during his absence, rendered their devotedness so necessary.

We have said, and we will have occasion to repeat it, that in the wonderful life of Columbus everything is an example and a lesson. The incidents connected with it, men and things, also convey their own instruction. If the family of the old Genoese wool-comber is a model to be proposed for the household of every artisan, the image of fraternal affection which united to each other these three brothers throughout life, is no less beneficent to the heart.

As, from this period, the two brothers of Christopher Columbus acted important parts in the affairs of the colony, and participated in the political life of the Admiral, it will not be devoid of interest to know who these two auxiliaries were whom Providence sent to His messenger.

Bartholomew Columbus left Lisbon in 1485, to go, on the part of his brother, to propose to the King of England the project of Discovery, which was rejected by Portugal. The ship he sailed in was captured by pirates, who robbed him of everything, and left him on an unknown shore. For a long time all his energy was taxed to procure the necessaries of life, and renew his wardrobe to effect his voyage. He spent several years in an unprofitable labor, — in constructing spheres and drawing charts for mariners, — before he could succeed in reaching the coast of England. There, he had first to learn the language of the country ; to provide for the means of existence ; to obtain the countenance of some patrons, and to learn the usages and the etiquette of the Court. It was only in the middle of the year 1493 that he obtained an audience of King Henry VII. The monarch liked the plan. To make the proof more sensible, Bartholomew painted an atlas. His reasoning was so clear and convincing, that the King welcomed the project, and entered on the preliminaries of a treaty with him. Bartholomew departed immediately to seek his brother.

While on his way to Spain, in passing through Paris, the news of the discovery of the New World, and of the tri-

umphal reception of Columbus, had reached London. The King of France, Charles VIII., welcomed, with honor, the brother of the man who had enlarged the known world. It was he himself who informed him of the event, and of the elevation of Columbus to the rank of Admiral and of Viceroy. Knowing that he went through his states, he graciously induced him to accept of a hundred gold crowns, to defray the expenses he would have to incur in his kingdom.

Notwithstanding the haste he made, when Bartholomew arrived at Seville the Admiral had already departed on his second voyage. He visited his sister-in-law, Doña Beatrix Enriquez, in Cordova, and, taking his nephews, Diego and Fernando, who were studying there, brought them to Valladolid, and presented them at Court. The Queen found the two boys were well raised, and complimented their uncle on their deportment; and, to finish their education and form their manners, wished to retain them at Court. The soldierly and chivalric bearing of Don Bartholomew, his facility for learning languages, his conversation and his experience, pleased King Ferdinand much. His abilities as a mariner were recognized. The Queen desired to retain him in her kingdom, as much for his own worth as to please the Admiral. Bartholomew received letters of nobility, and the command of three ships that were to take provisions to the colony. When he arrived in Hispaniola, the Admiral had started on his second exploration of Cuba.

Having entered on a sea-faring life a few years later than his brother, and sailed many times with him, he united theory to the surety of practice. Largely endowed with physical qualities, the cast of his physiognomy expressing frankness and a jovial humor, — when it was not severe, — was in harmony with his tall stature, and sustained with the vigor of an athlete. Of a chivalric intrepidity, very able in the management of every kind of arm, he knew, by the consciousness of his strength, and the manly tranquillity of his courage, how to command respect for his person.

One would say he was born to command; and if his devotedness had not determined him to remain eclipsed in the glory of his brother, he would have become illustrious by himself, on his own account, so much did he possess a high degree of military instinct, the genius of a navigator, and the foresight of an administrator.

His elocution was correct and easy, and the vivacity of his style was not wanting in elegance. With him, observation supplied the place of study. He spoke Latin, Italian, Portuguese, Danish, English and Spanish. Although he was a good Catholic, and devoted to his religion, his piety was not tender and elevated, like that of Christopher; he did not know the sweets of the interior life, and did not always suppress the sallies of his frankness, and of his muscular strength, against courtiers and traitors, and the obstacles which Castilian vanity opposed to the doing of good.

The second brother of the Admiral, Don Diego, did not resemble Don Bartholomew, save in his absolute devotedness to his oldest brother. Born several years after his brothers had gone to sea, Diego did not possess their robust constitutions. His sickly childhood required long and tender care. Little Diego, being the last son of Dominic Columbus, the only one who had always remained at home, Suzanna Fontanarossa kept him tenderly by her as long as possible.

When the Admiral returned from his first voyage, Diego quitted his trade, to obey his brother, who had written for him. With that docility to duty, and that instinct for becomingness, Diego, presented at Court, was soon on a level with his new career. His tender regard for his brother, the observance of his examples and of his recommendations, taught him what he ought to know. The devotedness of Diego was ennobled with a religious sentiment. He admired in his oldest brother the twofold preëminence of piety and of genius. He venerated him on account of his virtues; for Diego had no ambition for either renown, honors or riches. His sudden elevation did not puff him

up, for his heart appertained to God. He remained in the world without loving it, and solely through pure obedience, because such was the wish of his brother, his superior, his chief, whom he regarded as a second father. He aspired only to the service of God, and always occupied the different offices assigned him by the Admiral, as the employment which God wished him to discharge.

His inclination was for retirement, and the study of letters, which tardily presented him their charms, when a moment of respite permitted him to open his brother's books. In the solitude of his dwelling he imitated the regular habits of the Admiral, recited the office every day, and raised his heart to God.

This devotedness, so replete with self-denial, this voluntary, secondary existence, multiplying sacrifices without effort, assured the Admiral a vigilance against every attack, whilst the vigorous qualities of Don Bartholomew infused into his orders experience, foresight, and force, — in a word, the means of executing them.

SECTION II.

Besides the news brought by Don Bartholomew from Spain, the Admiral soon received more recent news, by Antonio de Torres, who came with four caravels, charged with provisions, refreshments, medicines, clothing, and merchandise, which he had requested, and bringing, for the service of the hospital, a physician and an apothecary, besides some miners and gardeners. The caravels also brought some live stock, and divers other matters. They likewise brought, for the household of the Admiral, some special objects, in which the Queen manifested her delicate ingenuity in providing for the comforts and state of the Revealer of the Globe.

But that which most concerned the Admiral was the satisfaction manifested by the monarchs. This was visible in the deference shown him in the royal letters. He recog-

nized in the gentle tone of them the very thought of the Queen. The Sovereigns replied to him in these terms, as laudative as they are respectful: "If we had been present we would have been of your opinion."* They gave him an account of the arrangement with Portugal in regard to commerce on the coast of Africa, and of the convention, signed the seventh of June, with the same power, relative to the line of demarkation. They confirmed all his nominations to office, approved of all his demands, and accompanied their obliging words with an ordinance, intimating to all those who resided in the Indies to obey the Admiral as Viceroy and as Governor. The order given to Juan de Fonseca, the director-general of marine, for the continuation of supplies of every kind to the colony, and the project of establishing a regular correspondence with Hispaniola, in despatching a caravel every month, prove sufficiently the intention of founding there a Castilian dominion. In her arrangements for the future of the colony, Isabella could not forget the propagation of the Catholic faith and the salvation of the Indians, the prime object of the discovery of those regions. She wrote to Father Boil, to excite his zeal, and to induce him to persevere in the enterprise of converting the natives; she endeavored to rouse the indolent missionary to action,† and assured him that by perseverance he would overcome all the difficulties of the language.

A missive of the Queen, dated the sixteenth of August, 1494, was particularly calculated to console the Admiral, and refresh his soul with its sweet sympathies.

This letter, the first that had come from the old world to the new, is of peculiar importance for the history of Columbus. It recalls the true object of the Discovery with a frankness wholly Christian. Under no pretext can anybody here, as the Protestant school has speciously done elsewhere,

* *Documentos Diplomáticos*, num. lxxx.

† *Muñoz*, *Historia del Nuevo Mundo*, lib. iv. § 24.

suspect, in the expression of religious sentiments, some political interest; because, already for more than a year, Castile, thanks to the Bulls of the third and fourth of May, 1493, was already in the legitimate possession of the lands discovered, and those she may still discover. Consequently, every exhibition of Catholic zeal would have been superfluous. Moreover, this administrative correspondence was solely destined for the eyes of the Admiral. But the secret escaped from the heart of the pious Queen, in speaking to the messenger of the Cross.

At first she mentions to him: "We have had a great pleasure in learning the things you have written to us; and for all these things we render heartfelt thanks to our blessed Lord. We hope that, with His aid, this work, which is yours, will be the cause of our holy Catholic Faith receiving great extension."*

Thus, the glory of Jesus Christ, the increase of His Church, is the first and chief theme of this royal communication. Before any reference to political or commercial matters, the object in view was the propagation of Catholicity.

After having undesignedly shown the true aim of Columbus, the Queen equally bears witness that this idea is the conception and the personal property of the hero. Isabella, who had with an attentive interest followed the development of this idea, and weighed the objections raised by its opponents, without foreseeing it, refuted in advance from that date the future detractors of the glory of the Admiral. Her precious testimony, dated the sixteenth of August, 1494, proves that the idea, the object, and the plan of the Discovery were the fruit of a spontaneous inspiration, ripened by study; and not the putting in practice of another person's thoughts, or the execution of an odious purloining, as his calumniators, at a later period, have pretended.

* *Letter dated from Segovia, the sixteenth of August, 1494, and countersigned by Fernand Alvarez.*

The Queen goes on to say: "And in all this, one of the chief satisfactions we enjoy is to feel that this enterprise has been conceived, explained, and executed by your genius, your ability, and your labor. And it appears to us that, since the first overtures, all that you told us should arrive has been in the major part effected, with as much precision as if you had seen it accomplished before telling us of it." *

SECTION III.

Nevertheless, the consolations adverted to could not remedy the evils that were committed during his absence.

The commandant, Pedro Margarit, who possessed, in the instructions of Columbus for the Spanish colony, all the elements of strength, life, and prosperity, deceived the expectations of the Admiral, and had set the Council of the Government at defiance. In place of proceeding to the exploration of the island, he came and encamped at ten leagues from Isabella, quartering his soldiers in the villages of the Indians, where they lived dispensed from all military exercise, while he himself yielded to sensual indulgences. Tidings of these excesses soon reached Don Diego Columbus. With the concurrence of the Council, he wrote to Margarit, enjoining him to execute the orders of the Admiral. But, in place of complying, Margarit gave an insolent answer. He affected to look down with contempt on Don Diego, came when he pleased to Isabella, and troubled himself no more about the Council than if his sword were the only authority in the island. His soldiers considered they did the Indians much honor in taking from them their wives, their provisions, and their gold, and in consuming in some days the provision that would have sufficed for the Indians the third of a year.

After having ruined the inhabitants of the Vega Real, Pedro Margarit, frightened at the consequences of his guilt,

* *Documentos Diplomáticos*, num. lxxix.

attempted to forestall the return of the Admiral, by taking possession of the ships brought by Don Bartholomew. As he could not seize on them alone, he recruited some malcontents, and promptly formed them into a party, to which he gave consistence in attracting the Vicar-Apostolic to it. A conformity of situation diminished the distance between these two characters. They were both Catalonians, and therefore not subject to Castile. Pedro Margarit had violated all his duties as chief of the military corps; Father Boil had omitted all his obligations as chief of the mission. These two murmurers, discontented with everything, because in the depths of their hearts they were discontented with themselves, increased their faction with those hidalgos who could not pardon the Admiral for having submitted them to manual labor. They slandered the Columbus, declared them upstarts, foreigners, and took pleasure in degrading these true gentlemen.

Father Boil feigned that he was quitting the colony through pure devotedness to it. It was necessary, without delay, to undeceive the monarchs, who were led into the belief that this country yielded gold, aromatics and spices, whereas it yielded only fevers, and other diseases unknown in Castile. They thus schemed their departure, seized on some vessels that were anchored at the port, and basely fled as true deserters. Several religious, whom the attraction of novelty induced to follow Father Boil to the Indies, not being able to become used to a mode of life for which they were not destined, followed him in his cowardly desertion.

The first mission in the New World was sterile, because he who directed it was not called from Above,—he had not consulted God. He had come among the savages by order of the Court, as if on a diplomatic mission. This fact, in the beginning of the Discovery, proves that nobody is a prophet unless he is chosen by God, and that the ministry of the Gospel has not been conferred on all indiscriminately. The apostolate is not imparted by royal nomination. A special vocation is needed for a special mission

requiring a particular vocation. While Father Boïl experienced only weariness, dryness and disgust in his functions, and while, without doing any good, he assisted in doing evil, a poor Franciscan monk, and a Hieronomite religious, who had come, led by a true vocation, in less than a year had already learned the language most generally spoken in Hispaniola, and had the consolation of publishing the glory of Jesus Christ and the doctrines of the Church among the different communities, in addressing the chiefs, — even the caciques themselves.

We will say more : evangelical grace was not granted to Father Boïl. The spirit of strength and of truth, which consecrates the apostolate, could not descend on this Catalonian diplomatist ; for in reality it was not he whom the Chief of the Church had nominated as his Vicar-Apostolic. The boldness of this assertion may appear rash ; still, we will maintain it. We owe it to truth, to the dignity of the Church, and to the justice of history, to clear up this singular fact, hitherto enveloped in obscurity, even for Spaniards. We will do it in a few lines, so as not to retard the course of our recital.

From all the documents and all histories, it is evident that Father Bernard Boïl, a Catalonian and a Benedictine monk, went to the Indies as Vicar-Apostolic. This is a patent, authentic and indubitable fact, which we fully recognize. Nevertheless, it was not this religious that the Holy See had nominated. It was with a culpable inconsiderateness, and in a manner almost fraudulent, that Father Boil, undoubtedly without his own knowledge, found himself in possession of a title which was not designed for him.

Ferdinand had, indeed, through his ambassador, presented to the Holy Father for nomination as Vicar-Apostolic of the Indies, the name of Father Bernard Boïl,* a Bene-

*Through scrupulous exactitude we are obliged to say that at Court it was then written *Buil* ; but, as the greater part of historians have written it Boil, we have followed their orthography. The Catholic Sovereigns addressed him thus : “ *Devoto Fray Buil*.”

dictine, well known by his ministers, and familiar at Court. But knowing the attachment of Christopher Columbus for the Seraphic Order, the participation of the Franciscans in the Discovery, the Chief of the Church reserved this honor for the humility of a disciple of St. Francis; and he named spontaneously, by a brief of the seventh of July, 1493, as Vicar-Apostolic to the Indies, "*Friar Bernard Boyl*, Provincial of the Franciscans in Spain."* For the first mission in the New World there was, above all, need for fervid preaching and active charity, and not simply for the offices of choir, the love of learning, or the shrewdness of protocols.

When the official copy of the Bull arrived in Castile, the King thought that there might have been in Rome an error in the designation of the person, on account of the similarity of name; that the Pope had designated Friar Boyl when he wished to have nominated Friar Boïl, and that it perhaps was a simple inadvertence of the chancery in the address of the Bull; and the more so, because the titular name was only on the margin; that is to say, the address was not in the body of the letter, but on the margin. Meanwhile, the matter becoming urgent, it was not deemed necessary to delay the departure of the Fleet, or to postpone the sailing of the missionaries before having an explanation of the part that was not considered clear. In consequence, as if it were a matter of no moment, the Benedictine, Father Boïl, received advice of the arrival of the Bull.† Nevertheless, to spare him any embarrassments he may have from scruples of conscience, the

*This is textually the address of the Bull: "*Dilecto filio Bernardo Boyl fratri ordinis minorum, Vicario dicti ordinis in Hispaniorum regnis.*"—A collated copy taken from the autograph register of the apostolic letters of the first year of the pontificate of Alexander VI., page 122. Obtained from the secret archives of the Vatican, and certified the seventh of February, 1851, by the Prefect of the Vatican.

† Letters of the twenty-fifth of July and of the fourth of August, 1493. — *Col. Dipl.* Nos. LII. and LX.

original of the official where the true superscription is read, was not sent to him. Under the singular pretext that it was not becoming to expose it to the accidents of the route,* it was retained in the office of the Secretary Royal. We ought to add that, for a long time, some considerate hand has made this important document disappear from the archives of Castile. It does not therefore form a part of the diplomatic collection published by order of the Crown of Spain. But the original of the Bull is preserved in Rome in the secret archives of the Vatican: it exists there; and a copy of it, duly collated and certified, was delivered for the first time for publication, on the seventh of February, 1851.†

Friar Bernard Boyl, Provincial of the Franciscans, appointed Vicar-Apostolic, had not, then, any knowledge of his nomination.

Friar Bernard Boil, chosen by the King, was sent in place of Friar Bernard Boyl, designated by the Holy Father. In the eyes of Ferdinand, there was, in the substitution he dared to make, only the retification of an address; he saw in the change that was made, only a letter in the name, and a title as regarded the person. It was Boil, in place of Boyl, and Benedictine, in place of Franciscan. Apart from this difference of orthography and of habit, it was always a religious, and a person of irreproachable morals; and, at bottom, he found no inconvenience in sending to the Indies a Benedictine well known at Court,

* El traslado della autorizado vos enviamos, como vereis: la original queda aca por algun peligro que podria haber in el camino." — *Registrado en el archivo de Indias en Sevilla. Coleccion Diplomatica*, num. LII.

† We cite the text certified by the Pontifical Archivist: "*Descriptum et recognitum ex autographo regesto litterarum apostolicarum Alexandri P. P. VI., anno I, pag. 122. Quod adversatur in tabulariis secretioribus Vaticanis. In quorum fidem hic me subscripsi et solito signo signavi.*"

"*Dabam ex tabularius præfatis VII., idus Februarii, anno 1851.*"

"MARINUS MARINI,

"*Tabularior S. R. E. Præfectus.*"

in place of a Franciscan, who probably was but little known there.

But the spirit of the Church cannot be trifled with. The Bull of the Holy Father did not come to its address, and the consequences are known.

If he had remained penetrated with the spirit of his rule, and given to prayer and study, this Benedictine could have edified his community, while serving Spain with his diplomatic ability. But, solely invested by the King with a spiritual mandate, and usurping, although unknown to him, the powers which the Sovereign Pontiff destined for the Order of St. Francis, he did not receive the invisible assistance that would have made them fruitful; he did not possess its efficacy, its power; on the contrary, in his illegitimate attributions, swerving from his vocation, and his own proper character, and not being where the Church wished him to be, he faltered, and fell beneath his own proper character. While his title of Vicar-Apostolic required from him the example of courage, of self-denial, of tender charity, and of constancy in trials, he showed himself tepid and cowardly; a missionary without virtue, a priest without dignity, and a citizen without allegiance; he dishonored his Order, became the echo of slander, the counsellor of conspirators; and, at last, shamefully joined civil defection to religious desertion.

The accomplice of Father Boil, the commandant Pedro Margarit, in abandoning his post, did not even take the pains of delegating his powers to one of his officers. The soldiers, finding themselves left to their own counsel, disbanded, going in troops in several directions, and multiplying the outrages with which they had harassed the Indians. Hitherto, the natives had remained submissive to force; but when by this division the Spaniards were weakened, they thought of recommencing the bloody scenes of the fortress. With the exception of Guacanagari, who, always retained by his devotedness to Columbus, bore and made his subjects bear the ruinous maintenance of a hundred soldiers impu-

dently domiciled in his dominions, the caciques became indignant at seeing themselves thus oppressed. Exasperated at the tyranny of which they were the unhappy victims, the inhabitants of the Vega resolved to make up by their number for the inferiority of their arms.

The kings of Xaragua, of Higüey, and of the Vega, entered into a league with Caonabo, to exterminate the proud depredators on all points of the island. Guacanagari, suspected on account of his hospitality, was kept out of this secret coalition, and treated as an enemy. Caonabo, aided by his brother-in-law, attacked him suddenly, took away from him one of his wives, and killed the one he loved most, the beautiful Catalina, who to join him had cast herself from the *Gracious Mary* into the waves. At divers points of the island Spaniards were massacred. The cacique Guatiguana massacred ten of them who were on the banks of the Grand River. Then he burned down the building that served as an hospital, and in which there were then forty patients and convalescents.

Such were the consequences of the misconduct of Margarit, and of the slanders of Father Boil; and such were the critical conjunctures when Columbus returned to the island.

Unpleasant tidings reached him from several quarters. In the mean time Guacanagari came to Isabella, and would by all means see the Admiral. He came to his sick-bed, and showed himself profoundly affected at his illness. He adverted to the tragical events of the fortress, protested anew with tears that he could not have prevented that misfortune; he reminded him that he was his friend, and that it was for that reason the other caciques had treated him as an enemy. He informed him of the plot formed for the extermination of the Spaniards; asked his aid against his neighbors, now become his enemies; and feeling, on seeing him, his first affection for him revive, offered to second him by every means in his power.

CHAPTER VI.

Columbus tries to break the League of the Caciques.—Caonabo is captured.—Combat of two hundred and twenty Spaniards against ten thousand Natives.—The Famine Plot.

SECTION I.

COLUMBUS could not leave unpunished the assassinations committed by Guatiguana, and especially his heinous crime against the forty patients in the hospital. Moreover, the hostility of the natives was become permanent. At this time, Captain Luiz d'Artiaga was closely blockaded in the fortress of Magdalena. Columbus, foreseeing that longer forbearance would occasion a greater effusion of blood, gave orders to attack the cacique Guatiguana suddenly, and simultaneously to relieve the fortress. The troops of the cacique were defeated and routed, but the chieftain himself made his escape.

At the same time, the Admiral endeavored to break the league formed by the grand caciques, in detaching from the coalition Guarionex, who reigned over the magnificent country of the Vega. He sent for him, and assured him that the chastisement inflicted on Guatiguana was a measure wholly personal, and that the crimes of the Spaniards committed in his absence would be equally punished. In this interview the Admiral acquired such an ascendancy over Guarionex, that he determined him to give his sister in marriage to the Lucayan, Diego Colon, the baptized interpreter who had served him so faithfully,* and to per-

* This is the marriage spoken of by Spotorno, confounding, by a strange aberration, the Indian interpreter, a native of San Salvador, with his godfather, Don Diego Columbus, the brother of the Admiral.

mit a fortress to be built in the midst of his dominions, which he dedicated to the Virgin, under the name of La Concepcion. By this means he would have communications with the country of the gold-mines, and could repress any insurrection that may take place. From that time the coalition became weakened, and was reduced to Caonabo, his brother-in-law Behechio, and the King of Higüey; and furthermore, the two latter could not dare to do anything without the support of the "Lord of the Golden House."

By paralyzing the power of Caonabo the peace of the island would be secured. But it was no easy matter to capture that cacique in his mountains, where the thorny thickets afforded him a natural defence. On the other hand, it would not answer to remain exposed to his onslaughts. While perplexed on this subject, Columbus was relieved by an offer of Alonzo de Ojeda to seize on the Carib chief by stratagem, and deliver him alive into his hands.

Ojeda set out on this daring expedition accompanied by nine cavaliers of tried courage and vigor, and, after traversing a distance of more than sixty leagues, succeeded in attaining his object. We are sorry that our space will not permit our giving the details of this romantic exploit.

The cacique had three brothers. One of them especially, Manicatex, who was naturally of a military turn of mind, collected a body of five thousand archers, and sent emissaries to other divers caciques to form a general rising against the Spaniards. Caonabo, seeking to take revenge by a feint, complained to the Admiral that during his detention the caciques bordering on his dominions maltreated his subjects, and besought him to be pleased to send some soldiers to different points of his territory. He expected his brother, Manicatex, would ensnare them, and make prisoners of them, in order by an exchange to effect his own release, or, at least, massacre them, which would render more easy the extermination of the rest of the strangers. But Columbus took good care to send, in place of small bodies, a strong

detachment, under the orders of Ojeda, — a measure which frustrated the plan of the captive Carib.

The Admiral knew that, with the exception of Guacanagari, the whole island was going to rise up in arms, so he determined to remain no longer inactive.

On the twenty-fourth of March, though still ailing, he entered on the campaign with an effective force of two hundred infantry and twenty horse. The inoffensive Guacanagari, at the head of his warriors, accompanied him, according to promise. The Admiral formed this small number of men into two corps, in order to divide the multitude of enemies he perceived on entering the Vega, and which, it is said, amounted to more than a hundred thousand men. Manicatex, on his side, had skilfully divided his troops into five battalions, who were to occupy the five outlets of the plain, support each other, and reunite when the handful of Spaniards marching against them would have entered the space unoccupied; then advancing, they could surround and stifle, by their multitude, this little force, which the scouts had disdainfully represented in their reports by a handful of maize.

The skill of the Admiral frustrated the able tactics of Manicatex. Don Bartholomew Columbus advanced resolutely with a hundred men, while another detachment charged impetuously on the left, and the intrepid Ojeda, with his twenty horse, precipitated himself on the main body. The shock of the cavalry broke all the lines, and the fire of the arquebuses caused a general rout. One of the brothers of Caonabo was taken prisoner, and brought to share the fate of the “Lord of the Golden House.” The Spaniards led a large number of their prisoners to Isabella.

This day insured for some time the general tranquillity of the island, in inspiring such an idea of the power of the foreigners, that soon after, when a Spaniard alone and unarmed, passed in lonely and unfrequented places, the Indians prostrated themselves before him, and were eager to put themselves under his orders.

SECTION II.

The Admiral continued his victorious march through several parts of the island, maintaining military discipline among his troops, and rendering justice to the natives, whom his presence also protected from all insults by the soldiery. Afterwards, in order to guard against any new confederations of the caciques, he resolved to build three more fortresses in the most important positions of the Vega. He drew the plan of them, and gave them the names of Santa Catalina, Esperanza, and Conception. With the exception of Behechio, brother-in-law to the "Lord of the Golden House," who remained quiet in the recesses of his most distant residence, the grand caciques made their submission, and offered to pay tribute to Castile. They expected it would be a light tax on vegetable productions, or one payable in labor on the public works undertaken by the Spaniards.

But the treasury of Castile wished to be indemnified for the expenses advanced for the two expeditions. The Admiral should prove that Father Boil, Firman Zedo the assayer, Pedro Margarit, and the bevy of deserters who followed them, lied against the facts of nature, and against the clearest evidence. To transmit gold was the sure means of encouraging the Sovereigns to prosecute the discovery of unknown regions, and thus amass the means of redeeming the Holy Places. Accordingly, he decreed the following tax: Every inhabitant of the districts of Cibao and of Vega Real, aged over fourteen years, was to pay the receiver of the royal dues, every three months, the measure of a hawk's bell of gold-dust or grains. Manicatex, the brother of Caonabo, was, in addition, obliged to pay, every three months, half a calabash of gold, amounting to about one hundred and fifty pesos. In the provinces that did not possess gold mines, the quarterly tribute consisted of twenty-five pounds of cotton for each individual. Guarionex, King of La Vega, offered to pay the impost in small grain in

place of gold, on the pretext that his subjects did not know how to gather it in the rivers of his territory. Columbus refused the offer, and required the tribute to be paid in gold.

On this point some historians have taxed, with rigor and improvident avidity, the conduct of Columbus. Las Casas, in his zeal for the defence of the Indians, could not fail to raise his voice against the first impost they had to bear. He points to the advantages of the proposition of Guarionex, who offered to cultivate a fertile plain of fifty-five leagues, the produce of which would furnish all Castile with bread for ten years. But it was not grain that Castile wanted. King Ferdinand demanded gold, and not small grain. And the pretext assigned by Guarionex that his subjects did not know how to gather gold in the rivers where it was to be found, was not admissible; in our own days, even, no head of an administration would have been contented with it.

The Admiral was constrained to procure gold. He knew that nothing else would satisfy King Ferdinand. Seeing, however, the difficulty some Indians had in furnishing the dust required, he lowered the demand to one-half of a hawk's bell.

Notwithstanding this lowering of the tribute, a gloomy sadness spread over the greater part of Hispaniola.

The servile labor required by the caciques from their subjects was never only of short duration; they limited themselves to some rights in hunting and fishing, to a little cassava or cotton, or to service in time of war. Their diet, almost exclusively vegetable, did not give them strength. They avoided all severe labor, Nature having herself provided for their principal wants. The greater part of their time was passed in slumbering, in plays, or in dances. Those near the sea-shore spent their time in dreamy and sterile reveries on the borders of the sea; while the inhabitants of the valleys and mountains of the interior whiled away their hours under delightful shades, occupied with telling stories, singing, and dances of several kinds. They had wandering poets and story-tellers, who recounted the

adventures of the Caribs, and the histories of sorcerers. These forest troubadours supplied with their feet the place of a harp or a mandolin; they were also great news-mongers. They translated into the several idioms of the island the poems or *areytos* of the celebrated Anocoano, whose name signified "The Golden Flower."

The Indians, seeing their inability of expelling the foreign intruders by arms, resolved to overcome them by famine. As the Spaniards were great eaters, and had received no provisions from abroad for a long time, they hoped to be able to extirpate them by bringing them no food. Accordingly they ceased from cultivating the land; they even plucked up the fruit-trees, and retired to the mountains, hoping to find there in roots, wild fruit, utias, fish, and fowl, sufficient for their own subsistence.

This measure was not carried into effect without obstacles; but it was principally at the cost of those who resorted to it. They took refuge in the most sterile and dreary heights. The cold and damp air of the caverns increased their troubles. They could settle down nowhere, and passed the nights exposed to the inclemency of the weather. The roots and fruit they met with here and there could not suffice for the nourishment of these multitudes, who fled unceasingly from fear of the Spaniards. The privations, the fatigues they endured, together with the insalubrity of the forests, where the excess of vegetation vitiated the air during the night, by the disengagement of carbonic acid gas in too condensed a state, engendered diseases of an epidemic character, which thinned the ranks of these poor wanderers; while the Spaniards found resources in fishing in the sea and rivers, and in the provisions that arrived without delay from Castile.

CHAPTER VII.

Complaints made to the Court against Columbus and his Brothers.
— Don Diego Columbus comes to Spain. — Chicanery of the Board of Marine. — The Bureaucratic Bishop, Don Juan de Fonseca. — Diego Columbus returns to Hispaniola. — Ingratitude of Aguado. — First Hurricane.

SECTION I.

IN the mean time the noble deserters had arrived at Court. Their justification was not possible but in representing the government of the Admiral under a repulsive aspect. Pedro Margarit and Father Boil found in the bureaus of the marine a corresponding echo of their exaggerations and calumnies. The archdeacon Fonseca, and the controller Juan de Soria, were not remiss in seconding these complaints. The hidalgos who had stealthily embarked spoke only with bitterness of Hispaniola, — a land of disasters and of deceptions.

These deserters, assuming the guise of victims escaped from the despotism of Columbus, came to seek refuge under the parental power of the monarchs, and to implore protection against the arbitrary proceedings of the Governor of the Indies. They exhibited letters dictated by malevolence, in which poor people who were too sick to embark represented their deplorable situation; they added that the gold of the island was found only in sand in some rivulets, and in too small quantity to make the gathering of it profitable. The riches of Hispaniola existed only in the imagination of the Genoese. Not content with attacking his character as head of the government, they sought to cast a

slur on his probity; they accused him of connivance in procuring gold for himself to the detriment of the rights of the Crown. In their blind hatred, they had already circulated this report before their departure from the island. But the receiver of Crown taxes, Sebastien de Olano, in a letter to the Sovereigns noticing this calumny, wrote that, far from authorizing the delivery of merchandise, and receiving gold in lieu thereof, in the absence of the controllers-general, the Admiral had, on the contrary, expressly forbidden it.*

Against these bitter accusations, who could take the defence of the Admiral? who could recall the terrible conjunctures in which he acted? Columbus was a stranger, and absent; his enemies had nobody to contradict them, and the multiplicity of their complaints must necessarily obtain credit for them.

The sacerdotal character of the Vicar-Apostolic served to give a sanction to all these calumnies, without the need of his taking the pains to renew them. His presence in Spain, when he was thought to be at the evangelical post to which he had the honor of being called by Ferdinand, sufficiently showed the grievousness of the occurrences in Hispaniola.

Notwithstanding the instinctive faith Isabella had in the excellence of Columbus, the number and the unanimity of the accusations that came against him could not fail in shaking her confidence a little. Making every allowance for wounded pride and exaggerations, this concert of complaints necessarily revealed some fault in the administration of the Admiral. Wishing to succor the sick without delay, and not to abandon the first germs of the colony, on the seventh of April the Queen ordered the director of the marine to send, without delay, four caravels to Hispaniola.

Two days afterwards, she entered into a contract with Juanoto Berardi, who was to provision and arm twelve

* *Documentos Diplom.*, num. lxxxi.

ships destined for Hispaniola. At the same time she wrote to the director-general of the marine, that Diego Carillo, a commander of a military order, should go and take upon himself the government of the island until the return of the Admiral, whose long absence led to the fear that he had perished in the voyage of exploration.

As a consequence of the unfavorable impression produced at Court, the propositions of some pilots who sailed with him in his first voyage were welcomed, in derogation, as they were, of his rights and privileges. They offered to undertake discoveries for the Crown without any indemnity, and at their own risk and personal expense. Fonseca supported these propositions.

Just at this juncture the ships commanded by Torres arrived in Spain. Don Diego Columbus brought specimens of gold, and of various animal and vegetable productions; it was therefore easy to confirm the Queen in her natural dispositions towards the Admiral. Still, such was the clamor raised against the Viceroy, that Isabella considered it prudent to inquire into the cause of these complaints. In place of Carillo, she had the delicacy to appoint Juan Aguado, an officer of her own household, who had been to Hispaniola, and who was under obligations to Columbus, inasmuch as the Admiral had recommended him to her on his return to Castile. From these circumstances, Isabella had reason to think that this choice of a commissioner of inquiry would be less disagreeable to the Viceroy than any other she could make. Accordingly she wrote to Fonseca to apprise him of the nomination of Aguado, who would take the command of the four caravels that were to sail for Hispaniola. As the ships brought by Torres contained a large number of rebel Indian prisoners, captured with arms in their hands, Don Juan de Fonseca received orders to have them sold in the markets of Andalusia. He, at the same time, was directed to send to Court Bernal Diaz de Pisa, the author of the first troubles in Hispaniola.

Although an ordinance had been expedited for the sale of

the prisoners, according to the custom that then prevailed in regard to infidels and idolaters, still a scruple arose in the mind of Isabella. The enterprise of the Discovery having, as a prime object, the conversion of nations who did not know Christ, the Queen considered within herself whether she should not treat these people as future children of the Church, and whether it was not contrary to the Gospel to enslave them? She commanded that the prisoners should be carried back to Hispaniola, and all set free, with the exception of nine, who were destined by the Admiral to serve as interpreters, and who were to remain some time in Castile, to learn the language.

This attention of the Queen for the Viceroy of the Indies served only to increase the hate entertained for him by the superintendent of the marine. It does not appear that he followed the injunctions of his sovereign with much assiduity; for, in twenty-five days after, she had to renew the expression of her will. From this moment the hate of Juan de Fonseca towards Columbus, and all that pertained to him, did not become lulled any more. Sometimes underhand and dissembled, sometimes imprudent and supercilious, it contrived every means to thwart the designs of the Admiral, to oppose his glory, and to force him, by the obstacles it raised against him, to consume the years which would have sufficed for him to discover the rest of the globe.

For a long time, in Spain, the episcopal title which was borne so unworthily by Don Juan de Fonseca has preserved him from the severe reproof of history. The historiographers royal, fearing censures, though forced to acknowledge his aversion, and even his "mortal hatred" for Columbus, have not dared to expose his conduct, and stigmatize it with their reprobation. For our own part, the ecclesiastical dignity he profaned shall not arrest our pen. It is meet to show, for the honor of the Episcopate, what sort of a bishop the director-general of the marine was. He had the title of "Bishop," but was not a pastor of souls. Without fulfilling the duties of a bishop, and without caring for his

flock, which he never guided, and did not even know, he still was called a bishop. Not seeing in the Episcopate but a dignity supported on revenues, he exchanged, when occasion offered, his bishopric for one more lucrative, — bartering the See of Badajoz for that of Cordova; quitting the bishopric of Cordova for that of Palencia; abandoning that of Palencia, as soon as possible, to pass to that of Burgos; then, from the See of Burgos, ascending to the archbishopric of Rosano; and, from the arch-episcopal dignity, aspiring to a dignity still higher! This instance of favor, almost unique, under the reign of Isabella, who was very scrupulous in the presentations for the Episcopate, was the personal work of King Ferdinand.

It was not in the nature of Isabella to have any predilection for Juan de Fonseca. The body of the Spanish bishops is the less responsible for the conduct of this prelate, as he existed only in a nominal manner. He was never an authority in work or example; and never did his words or his mandates edify anybody. He did not ascend to the evangelical chair, but always remained confined to the arm-chair of the director of the marine; and, save his taking possession, during which he received the homage of the diocese, whence he departed the next day, he was not seen to perform any pastoral function. The Spanish Episcopate does not claim him among its glories; the Church does not claim the director of the marine. We may, then, with full liberty, utter our sentiments respecting Juan de Fonseca, the instigator of all the injustices, of all the wrongs, that the man who had doubled the known creation had to suffer until his death.

A favorite with King Ferdinand, Don Juan de Fonseca knew how to make him a partaker of his own malevolence. The King, as is well known, did not wish to contribute anything for the Discovery. He took no other interest in it than the hope of finding gold mines, in order to draw from the treasury of Castile the sums necessary for his projects of conquest in Europe. Ferdinand, who could not easily

bear another's superiority, never pardoned his glory. Juan de Fonseca and his courtiers (for the favor he was in drew around him a court) detested Columbus. Several grand families were indeed jealous of the sudden elevation of this foreigner, and the director of the marine knew how to make these feelings subservient to his plans.

SECTION II.

On account of the chicanery of Fonseca, the caravels were not ready to sail until the end of August.

Aguado took with him on board Don Diego Columbus, who was returning to his brother, and some religious who went to replace the deserters of the Apostolate, who had returned with Father Boil. He also took with him the well-known metallurgist, Pablo Belvis, with several master miners and founders, provided with all the instruments of their art, as well as with a certain quantity of mercury to separate gold from sand, by means of amalgamation.

Aguado had received, from the text of his letter of credence, which was conceived in vague and brief terms, a discretionary power; but which assuredly was limited by the verbal instructions that accompanied its delivery. The Queen had nominated him, thinking that, by the choice of his person, what was disagreeable in his office would be mitigated in the eyes of the Admiral. Aguado, whose intelligent activity was praised by Columbus, was, in truth, a cunning fellow, who very well knew his own interests. In his relations with the director-general of the marine, he noticed the influence of Fonseca on the King, and the dispositions of the latter towards the Admiral, and then he understood the side he should support himself on for his own interest. From that time, he appeared to have received instructions contrary to those he received from the Queen; and it may be asserted, that in landing, before inquiring into any case, he put in execution a plan of conduct that was quite opposed to his antecedents, to his

friendly relations with the Admiral, and so odious that he could have received it only from Fonseca.

Directed by pilots formed under Columbus, the squadron arrived safely, in October, at the port of Isabella. At that very time Columbus was combating, in the states of Caonabo, the brothers of that cacique who had revolted. Aguado, as if he had been Viceroy of the Indies, attributed to himself all the powers of the government, and called to account the officers who were appointed by the Admiral. He reprimanded some of them sharply, and dared to imprison others, — paying no respect to Don Bartholomew Columbus, appointed by the Admiral governor of the place, as if he did not exist. He announced that he had come to inquire into the conduct of the Admiral, and to punish him promptly.

Don Bartholomew having demanded to see his letter of credence, Aguado rejected with haughtiness this request, saying that he would show it only to the Admiral himself. However, he had it proclaimed the next day by sound of trumpet. After having vented his vanity against the officials of the Admiral, fulminated threats against him, and sought to wound him in all his feelings, he said that the oldest of the Columbuses prolonged his absence from fear of him, not daring to appear before his judge; but that he well knew how to make him appear. Accordingly, he took a troop of cavalry to go in quest of him, when Columbus, hearing of the arrival of the commissary, returned to Isabella.

The decisive moment had come. Aguado was going to triumph, for he knew the fine sensibility of the Admiral, and in advance was sure that his multiplied affronts and insolence going beyond all human endurance, it would be impossible for Columbus to restrain himself; in this case, there would be nothing wanting but a report to show that he was wanting in respect for the royal authority. But the more provoking the offence was, and the farther it passed beyond the bounds of decency, the greater the secret pleasure

the servant of God experienced in making the sacrifice of his will. He resigned himself to the injustice with a satisfaction which even his enemies could not question; besides, he could not, as a Christian, disregard the principle of authority.

When, therefore, Aguado advanced to show his letter of credence, the Admiral received him with grave and punctilious ceremony, with the sound of trumpets, took the letter and read it, and having heard the commissary, graciously assured him that he was quite ready to do what would be prescribed for him on the part of the Sovereigns. For some time this calmness and moderation astonished and confounded Aguado. Still, as this deference foiled his object, he commenced talking in an arrogant tone, hoping, by the unbecomingness of his manners, to provoke the wrath of the Admiral. But, to his amazement, Columbus "bore his insolence with great modesty."

Aguado, foiled in his plans, and seeing the uselessness of provocations, had nothing left but to collect accusations against his former protector. He gathered the testimonies of the scum of the colonists, of the slothful, the cowardly, and of the discontented. Knowing that there had arrived, as they said, "a young Admiral who was to kill the old one," the Indians themselves came to proffer complaints against Columbus, their only defender, whom they made responsible for all the excesses committed by the Spaniards. Some caciques assembled at the dwelling of Manicatex, and resolved to lay their griefs before the envoy of the Sovereigns, — the redressers of wrongs. In December the inquiry which was opened by Aguado formed a large pile of papers, which appeared to him more than sufficient to insure irretrievably the ruin of the Colum-buses.

He was now prepared to return to Spain, and had given orders for that purpose. The preparations for his departure were actively going on, when, in the beginning of January, one of those tempests unknown in Europe, but which the

Indians called "huracan,"* burst on the island. It was one of those frightful convulsions of nature whose devastating character recalls the eruptions preceded by earthquakes. Within the memory of man no such perturbation was known. A conflict of typhoons had taken place in the atmosphere. The most violent of the whirlwinds traversed the north-western parts of Hispaniola, tearing up by the roots the largest trees, and hurling them to a great distance. When the hurricane reached the harbor, it whirled the ships round as they lay at anchor, snapped their cables, and sank them. As soon as the furious commotion in the air ceased, the sea suddenly swelled up. The bellowing waves arose to to the skies, overspread with gloom. Suddenly they overleaped the natural barriers opposed to their fury, and inundated the lowlands of the coast. The Spaniards believed the end of the world was at hand, while the Indians saw in this fearful ruin the punishment of the crimes of their oppressors.

After this elemental scourge had passed off, there was a hurrying to the port. Alas! of Aguado's four caravels, and three others that were at anchor, only a single one remained, — the smallest, the oldest, and the most fragile of all, — the *Niña*! — that caravel which had succored the Admiral in his shipwreck at Navidad, which had brought him back to Palos, which had afterwards, under the name of *Santa Clara*, borne him to the exploration of Cuba, the discovery of Jamaica, and the archipelago of the "Queen's Gardens," whence she had returned rickety, leaky, and ready to founder in the port, seeming to be inevitably doomed to perish!

* Hence our word *hurricane*.

CHAPTER VIII.

Gold Mines discovered. — Departure of Columbus for Spain with the sick and Indians. — Romantic Devotedness of a Cannibal Princess for Caonabo. — To save Provisions the Crew want to cast the Indians into the Sea, but they are protected by the Admiral. — He predicts the very Day when they will reach Land.

SECTION I.

COLUMBUS immediately ordered the repairing of the *Santa Clara*, and the building of another caravel which would be named the *Santa Cruz* (the Holy Cross), knowing the urgent importance of arriving in Spain when his new accuser would come there. During the building of the new vessel, for which the timbers of the wrecked vessels that had been saved from the waves were made subservient, he received news that was of more value for his defence than the vindication of his government, although the latter was directed by the most consummate prudence.

Some months before the hurricane, a young Arragonian named Miguel Diaz, attached to the service of Don Bartholomew Columbus, having a quarrel with one of his compatriots, fought with him and wounded him dangerously. Knowing the inflexible character of Don Bartholomew, he would not venture to sue for pardon, but took to flight, accompanied by the witnesses of the fray. Their wandering course led them to the banks of the Ozama, in the territory of a young female cacique, whose beauty captivated Diaz. The Indian princess soon became enamored of him, and became a Christian, to marry him. She took the name of Catalina.

Fearing that her husband would feel too much isolated from his countrymen, and may abandon her some day, she informed him of the existence of gold mines, at a distance of seven leagues from their residence, and engaged him to bring his countrymen to her territory. Diaz immediately saw in this communication the means of obtaining pardon. Accompanied by some of his wife's subjects, he resolved to go and present himself to Don Bartholomew. Concealing himself in the neighborhood of Isabella, he learned, from a friend, that the wounded man was alive and quite well; then he no longer feared to make his appearance. Don Bartholomew welcomed him, and reconciled him with his adversary. The news he brought was a providential support for Columbus.

Without loss of time he despatched Don Bartholomew with an escort of a detachment of infantry, and accompanied by the metallurgist Pablo Belvis, and some miners. They passed by the fortress of Conception, where they took guides, and, traversing the domains of the cacique Bonao, they arrived at the river Hayna, on the bank of which they found gold ore in abundance. They perceived it, also, in its tributary streams, and collected nuggets of it of considerable size.

Don Bartholomew returned with some nuggets of gold of great value. The Admiral received them with a lively gratitude to God for having fulfilled his desires, in sending him, at the moment of his departure, the best means of confounding his enemies, of encouraging the Catholic Sovereigns to continue the discoveries, and of enabling him to crown his labors with the conquest or the purchase of the Holy Sepulchre. In accordance with his usual habits of piety, he immediately retired to his oratory to thank the Lord, and offer Him the first fruits of the new discovery of gold. That part of the lands on the Hayna, where the gold mines were found, was called "St. Christopher," from the name of the fortress which Columbus ordered to be built there.

Before leaving, the Admiral would regulate, during his absence, the interior government of the colony. By virtue of his powers and privileges, he named as his Lieutenant-General his brother, Don Bartholomew, with the title of Adelantado,—a title by which he was always afterwards designated. He also nominated as superior magistrate of the colony Francisco Roldan, once attached to his personal service, and whom he had formerly raised to the rank of judge of the “first resort.”

Already Columbus was earnest in providing for the principal spiritual wants of the colony, so sadly neglected by Father Boil. He felt convinced that, during his absence, the Catholic religion would be preached to the populations of the island. He confided the honor of this apostolate to a Franciscan, Father Juan Bergognon, with whom he associated the pious Friar, Roman Pane, who was favored with the gift of languages. Then he sent the latter into the country of the cacique Guarionex, and charged him to reduce to writing a memoir on the primitive religious opinions of the Indians, their genesis and cosmogony. Notwithstanding his zeal for the glory of the Saviour, Friar Pane, who humbly called himself the *Poor Hermit*, for a moment became afraid at the idea of going alone among an irritated and capricious people. He mentioned his fear to the Admiral, and besought him to permit him to take some Christians with him to console and sustain him in his solitude. Columbus, with the best grace, authorized him to take with him any person he judged proper, and took care, at the same time, to station a post of infantry within reach of the residence of the missionaries, to prevent the idolaters from making any attempts on their persons.

Although the fickleness of their character, and the confusion that reigned in their religious opinions, preserved the Indians from a fierce fanaticism, their priests, called *Bohatis*, who acted at once the part of physicians and of sorcerers, had an interest in preventing a new religion from ruining their rather lucrative occupation, and they could

have armed the hands of their credulous dupes. Fundamentally, the religion of the islands consisted in a gross faith in certain idols, which they named *Zemes*. These zemes, sometimes of wood, sometimes of stone, and very varied in their forms and attributions, were very nearly similar to the *fetiches* of the negroes. The Bohutis, or priests, did not constitute a distinct body; they had no dotations nor hereditary privileges. They did not reign over the caciques, and, on their side, the caciques did not endeavor to lessen their influence on the superstition of the people. To overthrow this religion, destitute of formal dogmas and of symbols, and holding to the soil by no traditional root, the mildness and charity of the Gospel should have sufficed. Unfortunately, the violence and vices of the Spaniards gave these people false notions of Catholicity, and, confounding the religion with the men, they made Christianity responsible for the crimes of their oppressors.

SECTION II.

At the end of February, the two caravels were ready for the voyage. The sick, the discontented, and the disappointed hidalgos, to the number of two hundred and twenty-five, besides thirty-two Indians, — among whom were the haughty Caonabo, with a brother, a son, and a nephew, — were divided among the two vessels. Aguado embarked on the new caravel, and Columbus on the poor but faithful *Santa Clara*.

On the tenth of March, 1496, the two vessels left the port, and proceeded to the east, to try a new route. Experience had not yet revealed the winds that prevail in these latitudes. It was not at that time known that it was necessary to steer directly northwards, so as to fall in with the track of westerly winds to favor the return to Europe. Columbus had to make way against the winds, and to weary himself with incessant toils. He passed twelve days in thus struggling before he lost sight of the eastern

cape of Hispaniola. At length he gained the open sea, on the sixth of April. Their provisions having become diminished from a consumption of twenty-six days, the Admiral determined to stop at the Caribbee Islands, to take in a fresh supply.

On the tenth, casting anchor before Guadaloupe, he sent two boats, well armed, on shore, to procure provisions, which were to be paid for in European trinkets: Suddenly the beach became covered with amazons, decorated with tufts of feathers, and armed with bows and arrows, prepared to oppose their landing. As the sea was rough the boats remained at a distance, and two of the Indians from Hispaniola swam to the shore. They told the women that there was no injury intended for them, and that the strangers sought only provisions, for which they were ready to pay in gems, and that they came from heaven (from *Turey*). The women referred them to their husbands, who were on the northern side of the island.

The boats proceeded thither. They perceived on the beach a crowd of warriors of ferocious aspect, yelling and discharging flights of arrows, which, however, did not reach their mark. Seeing that the boats did not the less approach the land, they hid themselves in the adjacent forest, whence they rushed forth with hideous cries as the Spaniards were landing. A discharge of fire-arms soon made them retire to the forest, leaving their habitations deserted. In these were found provisions, some beautiful parrots, and the arm of a man, which was roasting before a fire.

The Admiral sent a detachment of forty men to reconnoitre the island. They returned the next day, bringing with them three children and six women, among whom was the haughty wife of a cacique.

The Spaniards passed nine days on the island, laying in a supply of cassava. Being on the point of setting sail, he sent on shore the captive women and children, with many presents, such as all Indians dote on. But the wife of

the cacique declared she and her daughter would remain on board, and go and see the country of the mighty strangers. This motive was but a pretext.

This intrepid woman, seeing Caonabo in chains, and knowing that, like herself, he was a native Carib, with cannibal instincts, — was touched with his misfortune. A horrible sympathy retained her at his feet. Sacrificing her duties, her future, to the enthusiasm of a suicidal glory, she suddenly forgot her children, her husband, her tribe and her country, to consecrate herself to solacing the weariness of the hero, whose exploits had electrified her imagination.

SECTION III.

On the twentieth of April, they again opened sail. The struggle against the winds recommenced, and by the twentieth of May they were still in the midst of the ocean. None of the pilots knew the latitude they were in, and sadness and discouragement became general. Their fresh water had already failed them, and their provisions became so reduced, that Columbus was obliged to put every one on a daily allowance of six ounces of bread. As usual, he gave himself the example of equality in distress. The ignorance of the distance they were from land increased the general inquietude. The pilots differed among themselves about the route, and thought they were wandering in the boundless ocean. The Admiral now assured them that they were about a hundred leagues from the meridian of the Azores, which was the exact case.

Columbus paid particular attention to the sick. His compassion, and his piety, found means to console these poor people, the greater part of whom were suffering before they came on board. Whilst in the caravel of Aguado, the sick workmen and soldiers received no attention from the commissary; those on board the *Santa Clara* received every care and comfort that were possible. We cannot

doubt that the venerable Father Juan Perez de Marchena, seconding the Admiral, assisted them with spiritual aid, the value of which is doubly felt in misfortune.

About this period Caonabo died, and his brother survived him only a few days.

The sufferings from scarcity of food continued to increase from hour to hour, and low murmurings were heard. The Spaniards darted alternately looks of pity and of wrath at the thirty Indians who were on board. Famine, that horrible feeling which overcomes every tender sentiment, excited cruelty and suggested crime. Some of the Spaniards proposed to kill and eat the Indians; others advised that they should be thrown into the sea, as so many expensive and useless mouths. The latter party seemed to prevail.

On the seventh of June, this cruel resolution was made public. When it became known to the Admiral, the compassionate mildness which he had hitherto exhibited gave place to the most courageous energy. He arose in the height of his majesty, and stilled the tumult of despair. God coming to his aid, he silenced the promptings of famine, and declared firmly to these men that he discovered the Indies to beget souls for Jesus Christ the Lord; that these Indians, redeemed at the price of the same blood, were their brethren; that he conducted them to Castile in order to make them children of the Church, and friends to the Spanish nation; and that he would not permit the perpetration of this abominable crime. He reminded them that patience in sufferings was a characteristic virtue of Christians, — the mark of their superiority. He further added, that the fear which instigated this cowardly crime was the effect of error and ignorance, as in three days they would be in the waters of Cape St. Vincent.

The pilots scoffed at these words; but, on the evening of the third day, the Admiral ordered that sail should be taken in during the night, as they would see land the next day. The event proved the correctness of his announcement.

Reflecting on the matter, and remembering how, from

the first Discovery, all the diverse predictions of the Admiral were verified by the events, the greater part of the sailors, and even of the pilots, were not far from thinking that perhaps he called to his aid the secrets of magic ; and that at least, in all great circumstances, he was endowed with an inspiration almost divine.

CHAPTER IX.

Columbus wears publicly the Habit of the Franciscans. — He goes to Court. — At the sight of him the Queen forgets all the accusations brought against him. — Measures taken in favor of the Colonies. — Columbus refuses a Principality. — He establishes a Majorat, or Mayorazgo. — Outrages received when entering on his Third Voyage.

SECTION I.

ON entering the Bay of Cadiz, Columbus found three caravels, commanded by his old pilot, Pedro Alonso Niño, on the point of sailing with supplies for the colony. Niño immediately delivered him the despatches addressed to him; and, after having read them, he considered it proper to modify a little the instructions left with his brother Don Bartholomew.

The flotilla having sailed, Columbus occupied himself with the care of the sick and distressed whom he brought with him. The paternal solicitude with which he had continually treated them during the voyage, at length opened their eyes. When embarking, they were prejudiced against him; but they landed as grateful for his goodness, as they were indignant at the offences he had received from the commissary Aguado.

Columbus did not go immediately to Court. Having informed the Sovereigns of his arrival, he determined to await their orders. It was not until a month after, that they wrote to him, from Almazan. Their message was dated the twelfth of July, 1496.

It is evident that Aguado had full time to communicate to the director of marine the enormous pile of documents he had brought with him from Hispaniola; to add verbal

comments to them, and thus deceive the Sovereigns. It appears his proceedings were not unsuccessful. After having many times heard the complaints of Father Boil and Pedro Margarit, the Queen had yet to consider the hostile testimonies of the commander Gallego, of Rodrigo Abarca, of Micer Girao, and of Pedro Navarro,—all servitors of the royal household, and therefore worthy of confidence.

During the month that elapsed between the arrival of Columbus and the answer of the Sovereigns, history has lost sight of the Admiral. It is only known that, disgusted with the deceit and the weaknesses of the Court, and counting only on God, he wished from that time to retire from the world. Unmindful of what may be thought of him, he allowed his beard to grow, and wore exteriorly his cord over the habit of St. Francis, the latter being somewhat shortened. We have reason to believe that he even seriously contemplated following to La Rabida his venerable friend Father Juan Perez de Marchena, who went there to finish his mortal career.

Some writers, who did not comprehend the eminently Christian character of Columbus, have been puzzled about the religious habit with which he invested himself on his return from his second voyage. Washington Irving conjectures that he put on this garb “in fulfilment of some penitential vow made in a moment of danger.”* But, in the first place, he encountered no tempest on his return. He had contrary winds, because they blew towards the Antilles; but they were regular, and alternated with calms. This conjecture is therefore unsustained by facts. The statement of Oviedo can leave no doubt as to the cause of the costume he adopted: he says it was through disgust for the world,† and the mortification he felt at the injustice done him.

* Washington Irving. *History*, etc., Book ix., chap. ii.

† Oviedo y Valdez. *Hist. nat. y gen.*, etc., lib. ii., chap. xiii.

Las Casas, in his *History of the Indias*, says he saw the Admiral in Seville, clothed very nearly like a Franciscan monk.* The curate of Los Palacios mentions his receiving at his house the Admiral, wearing the cord of St. Francis, and a garment the cut and color of which recalled the habit of the religious of the Observance.† Humboldt considers it was "through devotion he appeared in the streets of Seville wearing the habit of the monks of St. Francis."‡ So it is gratuitously that Irving supposes a vow which no circumstance could have occasioned, and of which no cotemporary writer makes mention.

At length the letter of the Sovereigns came to hand. They felicitated the Admiral on his happy voyage, and invited him to come to Court when he would have sufficiently recovered from his fatigues. The letter was conceived in gracious and flattering terms. Columbus immediately repaired to Burgos, where the Court then resided. During his journey, in order to remove the prejudices the deserters from the colony had inspired against the Discovery, he displayed the rarities he had brought with him,—gold masks, nuggets of gold, the Indians who accompanied him; he had a chain of gold put round the neck of Caonabo's brother, that weighed six hundred castellanos. §

Whatever may have been the complaints lodged against the Admiral, the Queen wholly forgot them as soon as he appeared, and felt for him only the natural attraction, the feeling interest, mingled with respect, with which the envoy of Providence had formerly affected her. His aspect alone was a conclusive refutation of the charges of his enemies.

Columbus exposed in its reality the situation of the colony. Isabella now knew the dire necessity that constrained him

* Las Casas. *La Historia de las Indias*, lib. i., chap. ii., MS.

† Andres Bernaldez. *Hist. de los Reyes Cat.*, chap. vii., MS.

‡ Humboldt. *Hist. de la Geograph. du Nouveau Continent*, t. i., p. 22.

§ Equal to the value of three thousand one hundred and ninety-five dollars of the present time. — B.

to those measures of safety which egotism and vanity taxed with cruelty. The Admiral narrated to their Highnesses his discovery of the archipelago of the Caribbees, of Cuba, and of Jamaica; spoke of the mines of Cibao, and of those of Hayna; gave them some masks ornamented with gold, some cinctures embellished with gold, some purses filled with grains of gold from the mines of Cibao, and others with nuggets as large as nuts, that were yielded by the mines discovered at the time of his departure. He also presented them with many objects unknown in Europe, such as sacred stones, images, arms, instruments, besides animals, birds and plants, which they had not yet seen. These productions of the new country charmed the Queen. Ferdinand was more sensibly touched by some fragments of gold ore than by anything else. They thanked Columbus; loaded him with kindness, and treated him publicly with all possible honor, to the great disappointment of his enemies.

If we did not know the uprightness of the Queen, incompatible with every kind of dissimulation, we would have an unquestionable proof of sincerity in the letter, so full of royal bounty and maternal gratitude, she addressed from the port of Laredo, the eighteenth of August, to thank him for his advice on the route to be taken by the fleet that was to convey to Flanders the Infanta Doña Juana, the affianced bride of the Archduke Philip of Austria. The Queen thanked him doubly for the sagaciousness of his advice, always of great weight, and for the delicacy of his attention; to which was added the timeliness of his letter, coming at the moment of departure. Isabella recognized in this circumstance that zeal and affection which he always manifested in everything that concerned her service, and begged him to consider that she received this testimony as that of a most particular and faithful servitor.

After having assisted at the embarkation of her daughter, the Queen could scarcely resolve to part with her. She remained two days and nights with her on board the ship. She had prepared a cortege for her, chosen from the nobility

of the two kingdoms of Castile and Arragon. The fleet, composed of a hundred and thirty sail, under the command of the Grand Admiral of Castile, conveyed an escort of about twenty thousand men. It sailed, with a fair wind, on the twenty-second of August; and when it disappeared from sight, the Queen returned to Burgos very sad, to occupy herself with other preparations for the reception of Princess Margaret, daughter of the Emperor Maximilian III., who had recently espoused the Infant Don Juan, the Prince Royal.

SECTION II.

In the midst of these maternal preoccupations and cares, Columbus could not becomingly press the Queen to order immediately preparations for a third voyage of discovery. It became necessary for him, as at the time of his first expedition, to wait in silence and restrain his legitimate impatience. During the forced inaction of his sojourn at Burgos, the Admiral could not fail in promptly entering into intimate intercourse with a man of that city already become, at the request of Isabella, his correspondent before he left Hispaniola, but whom as yet he knew only by character.

This man was the celebrated Jaime Ferrer, the lapidary, who travelled in all parts of the known world, and was at once a traveller, a close observer, a linguist, a mathematician, an astronomer, a cosmographer, a metallurgist, a scholar, a philosopher, a poet, and almost a theologian. In the original work of M. De Lorgues there is a lengthy and highly interesting notice of this extraordinary personage, to which we would invite the attention of such of our readers as are acquainted with French, as we have not space for it in the present work.

In a letter to the Queen, this lapidary, speaking of Columbus, writes as follows: "I believe that in its high and mysterious designs divine Providence has chosen him as its mandatory for this work, which seems to me to be but an introduction and a preparation for things which this same

divine Providence reserves to itself to disclose to us, for its own glory and the salvation and happiness of the world." *

SECTION III.

In the commencement of autumn, Ferdinand returned to Burgos. There were neither money, nor vessels, nor men for the contemplated expedition. Still, Isabella ordered six million maravedis to be advanced for the equipment of a squadron for Columbus.

The twentieth of October, the pilot Pedro Alonzo Niño, returning from Hispaniola with three caravels, entered the port of Cadiz. In place of repairing immediately to Court, he went to visit his family, and contented himself with writing that he had a large amount of gold on board his ships. Ferdinand, much pleased at this news, immediately changed the destination of the six million maravedis, employing them to fortify Roussillon, then menaced by the French, and ordered the deduction of a similar sum for the Admiral from the gold brought by the caravels from Hispaniola. It was only towards the end of December that Niño presented to the Sovereigns the despatches with which he was charged. Then appeared the sad explanation of the metaphor used by the pilot. The large amount of gold boasted of in the letter, consisted of three hundred Indian prisoners, from the sale of whom the vaunted gold was to come.

This absurd hyperbole had a deplorable effect on public opinion. Ferdinand became very angry, and the Queen was much hurt that, notwithstanding her preceding orders respecting the liberty of the Indians, so many of them were now sent her. Still, in sending them to Castile, the Adelantado had only conformed to the royal orders concerning the Indians who should take part in the murder of Spaniards. The Admiral was much grieved at the cargo

* *Coleccion Diplomatica*, docum. num. lxxviii.

sent by the Adelantado, and particularly at the accounts he received from the colony.

All the enemies of Columbus appeared to be now justified. All the specimens of gold shown by the Admiral were mere baits. The bureaus of marine at Seville were rejoiced at the humiliation of the Genoese. The minds opposed to new things disapproved highly of the discoveries. At Court, nobody felt restrained in criticising distant colonizations. The Admiral was censured, even in his presence. Everybody blamed his views; he was, as he himself says, "oppressed with reproaches." Statesmen and financiers pretended that the monarchs would never cover their expenses, and that there was nothing to be gained but ruin and misfortune from such bold projects, especially when they were confided to foreigners.

The report of these clamors came to the ears of the Admiral. He feared that their influence would at last dissuade the Sovereigns from the enterprise. He expressed his disquietude to the Queen, who answered him "with that great heart which everybody knew her to have," that he must not pay "the least attention to these remarks, because her intention was to pursue this enterprise, and sustain it, even if it should yield only rocks and stones; that she would not stop at the expense, that she considered as well employed what she had expended and would still expend, because she believed our holy faith would be extended, and her kingdoms enlarged, and that those who disparaged it were no friends to her royal Crown." *

SECTION IV.

It was not until the twenty-third of April that Isabella issued an ordinance for the purchase of commodities for the Indies. The Admiral obtained leave to take in the pay of the Crown three hundred and thirty persons, of different

* Christopher Columbus. — *Navarrete's Collection*, t. i.

trades, who should go and settle in the Indies. The same day, the Queen extended the powers formerly accorded him; and, to give the Admiral a new pledge of her solicitude for his interests, she solemnly confirmed the privileges that were given him in the city of Santa Fé.

Such was the generosity of Isabella, that, in consideration for his recent discoveries, she offered Columbus to give him, as an appanage to his vice-royalty, a principality which would be constituted in Hispaniola, in the quarter he would choose himself. This private domain would have an extent of fifty leagues by twenty-five in breadth; and at his option it would be erected into a duchy or a marquissate.

Without doubt this offer was very tempting. Columbus, the father of a family, would thus see himself recompensed in his posterity. This duchy, — a true principality, — would have enabled him to found a powerful house for his second son, while the oldest one would succeed to his dignities as Admiral of the Ocean and Viceroy of the Indies. But the man of desire, the contemplator of the Word, would be influenced by no human considerations. In him the apostle got the mastery over the head of the family. Designing, from the commencement of his enterprises, to discover the space of the whole globe and make its circuit, and, finally, to deliver the Holy Sepulchre, he feared that the natural attachment for an estate so vast, and the government of this little state, would tempt his heart as a father, retard his explorations, delay the accomplishment of his almost evangelical labors, and perhaps divert him from the continual vigilance he owed to the general interests of the colony; so, with a renunciation wholly Christian, he refused the royal offer.

Hitherto most historians have admired this disinterestedness; but the true motive of Columbus has escaped their notice. This motive, which his modesty concealed, they have interpreted in a sense purely worldly. According to these writers, he feared that the envy of the *grandeės* would be increased by this favor, and that the officers of the

exchequer would accuse him of having chosen the best part of the island, and of having sacrificed the public interests to his own personal advantages. These considerations appear to us to be very feeble and very subordinate, if not very puerile, when the Admiral's greatness of soul is considered. We cannot admit that they could stagger a character so superior to the caprices of mere opinion; and, assuredly, they would not have arrested a heart eager for riches, or a mind like his, accustomed to overcome obstacles. The influence of his vocation can alone explain his sublime refusal.

Notwithstanding the inducement of royal pay and the hopes of gold, nobody came to be enrolled for the new expedition. An ocular witness explains to us the cause of this universal repugnance. "Because those who went with the Admiral * * * returned sick, emaciated, and of so sickly a color that they appeared more dead than alive, the country of the Indies was so much decried, that nobody could be found who would venture to go there."

In this extremity, in consequence of the unfavorable reports the enemies of Columbus had spread against the Indies, it became necessary to seek in the prisons and the galleys for recruits for Hispaniola.

The Sovereigns published a pardon for all subjects guilty of certain crimes and misdemeanors, on condition of their serving for a certain time. Those who were condemned to death, on their passing two years there, were to be liberated; and a year's sojourn there cancelled all condemnations short of capital punishment. Thus, save the cases of heresy, treason, arson, and coining, all swindlers, perjurers, robbers, and even murderers, by going at their own expense to Hispaniola, could return at the end of that time, rehabilitated. By a letter patent addressed to all the officers of justice, they were ordered to conduct all those that were condemned to banishment, or forced labor, to the *Assistente* of Seville, who was to deliver them to the Admiral. Isabella also accorded to Columbus the power of

dividing among the colonists lands proper for settlements, under certain conditions.

She confirmed the nomination of Don Bartholomew Columbus as Adelantado of the Indies. But the King appeared offended at this nomination, which he pretended to be too important to be made directly by the Admiral without the permission of the Sovereigns; the letter of ordinance simply nominated Don Bartholomew Adelantado of the Indies from the twenty-third of July, without any mention of the anterior nomination of him by the Admiral.

Notwithstanding the kindly dispositions for a new enterprise manifested by the Queen since the month of July, 1496, no steps for its execution were taken by the Bureau of Marine at Seville, up to the month of September, 1497. Columbus spent a whole year in waiting and soliciting their back pay for his men, the greater part of whom had abused and calumniated him, but whom he compassionated and defended, because they were suffering. The most lively solicitude of the Admiral did not proceed from these delays. His greatest anxiety was about the colony, which was left without even indispensable necessities, and which he foresaw was in a worse state than was represented, — and such was actually the case.

Soon a public misfortune occurred, which put off still further the preparations for the expedition. This was the lamented death of the Infant Don Juan, on the fourth of October.

Sympathizing with the idolized Queen in her bitter and profound affliction, the Admiral had the magnanimous courage of keeping silence until the twenty-third of December. At this period, seeing the impossibility of overcoming the passive opposition of the bureaux of Seville, who represented that they could not provision the ships on account of the exorbitant prices demanded by victuallers, and the little anxiety they showed in furnishing him with supplies, Columbus obtained permission, conjointly with Fonseca, to fix

the prices of provisions and munitions destined for the Indies, and to engage purveyors at fixed prices.

Thus, after eighteen months' patience, the Admiral of the Ocean, the Viceroy of the Indies, was obliged to go himself, from store to store, to purchase provisions, wine, oil, etc. This strange and fatiguing *role*, which his zeal for the service of God and of his Sovereigns made him accept, was not the least of his sacrifices. Still, notwithstanding his efforts, with the sum he received he could provision only two caravels. The presentiment he had of the wants of the colonies in Hispaniola, made him despatch there these two vessels under the command of Pedro Fernandez Coronel, who sailed on the eighteenth of February, 1498.

The Queen, giving a new mark of her high consideration for the Admiral, took into her household his two sons as pages.

It appears that at this time Isabella insisted anew on Columbus's accepting the appanage of that principality of twelve hundred and fifty square leagues in Hispaniola, formerly offered him, but he persevered in his refusal with generous devotedness. Still, this attention of the Queen to his interests suggested to him the idea of disposing definitively for the future of the revenues and incomes which his convention with the Crown of Castile guaranteed to his line by right of primogeniture.

SECTION V.

With the consent of his royal protectress, the Admiral resolved to establish a mayorazgo, which would perpetuate in his descent the remembrance of the Discovery and the fruit of his labors. Accordingly, on the twenty-second of February, 1498, Columbus, by an authentic act, founded his institution of Mayorazgo, or Majorat. Without entering into the details of this strange document, we will only advert to some stipulations that paint to the life the char-

acter, the inmost life, and the faith of the man who doubled the known world.

In the first place, this institution of *mayorazgo*, which is to be the realization of the fruit of his perseverance and labors, is made under the invocation of the Most Holy Trinity, who, he says, "inspired me with the idea, and afterwards made it perfectly clear to me that one could navigate and go to the Indies from Spain, by traversing the ocean westward." *

Then he recalls that it was by the grace of the Almighty, in the year 1492, he discovered the land of the Indies and numerous islands; that thus our Lord accorded him this triumph over error and incredulity, and, as a consequence, he hopes, with certainty, that before long the rights that have been granted him over these islands and *terra firma*, will yield considerable proceeds, and that therefore he institutes a *mayorazgo*.

But this *mayorazgo*, this solemn and testamentary act, the effects of which will be the completion of his glory and the enduring recompense of his labors, — before founding it, before specifying its conditions and requirements, and even before announcing it, — he places under the personal protection of the Chief of the Church. As he has labored for the glory of Jesus Christ, and as his course of life has prepared a great extension for Christianity, he confides the respect for the rights he is to acquire, and the integrality of his institution, to the vigilance and the authority of the Sovereign Pontiff, because this *mayorazgo* is instituted "for the service of Almighty God." It is under the fulminations of the Church that he shields the maintenance of his supreme and last will.

The institution of a *mayorazgo*, or *majorat*, is but too often the consecration of pride and paternal complaisance for a vain posterity. But in this case, Christian humility,

* INSTITUCION DEL MAYORAZGO. *Coleccion Diplom.*, docum. num. CXXVI.

and a sincere devotedness to the Church, show themselves all at once.

Columbus constitutes, as his heir, his eldest son, Don Diego, and after him the eldest of his sons; the succession to be thus transmitted by the right of primogeniture. He imposes on his heirs the obligation of taking in their signature but the simple title of *Admiral*, without any enumeration of his dignities. The possessor of the mayoralazgo must write his signature according to the formula used by Columbus himself. Now this formula, composed of initials, was a prayer. For always, in the presence of God, he made the sign of the Cross at the commencement of all his writings, and in signing them traced a prayer in the form of a sign-manual, or signature.*

Afterwards he obliges the inheritor of the mayoralazgo, in honor of the Almighty and Eternal God, to pay to the poor the tithe, or tenth, of his revenues. By these poor, the heir should at first, by preference, understand the necessitous of the family of the Admiral. Thus, by this solemn act, which the Pope, the Catholic Sovereigns, and consequently Spain, the Republic of Genoa, and the States of the New World, were called upon to witness that he did not blush at the poverty of his parents,—he who wrote, “I am not the first Admiral of my family,” and who compared to the favors bestowed on David the graces God had vouchsafed to grant him.

After these orderings, Columbus comes to the pious sub-

* His sign-manual was composed of the following letters thus disposed:—

S.

S. A. S.

X. M. J.

xpo FERENS.

These initials signified: *Servus Supplex Altissimi Salvatoris*.—*Christus, Maria, Joseph*.—CHRISTO FERENS. The suppliant servant of the Most High Saviour.—Jesus, Mary, Joseph.—Christ-bearer.

ject of his solicitude, the final object of his ambition on earth, — the redemption of the Holy Sepulchre.

He declares it to be the duty of every person who has wealth to serve God, either with his person or with the property he has received from Him. He recalls that, at the time when he was preparing to set out for the discovery of the Indies, he had the intention of supplicating the Sovereigns to employ all the profits accruing from the Indies in the conquest of Jerusalem. Consequently the inheritor of the mayorazgo will take care to amass large sums of money, in order to go with the Sovereigns to make the conquest of Jerusalem; and in case of their refusal, must go alone, with all the forces he can collect. He hopes that their Highnesses, seeing him undertake this enterprise, will aid him to accomplish it.

After delivering the Holy Places from the yoke of the Turks, Columbus occupies himself with insuring the temporal independence of the Holy See against all the eventualities of the future. As if he foresaw that Protestantism was soon about to emerge from the shade of a German cloister, he thinks of shielding the Sovereign Pontiff from its attacks. His own words leave no doubt as to the thought of the servant of God: —

“Item. I require of Don Diego, or of whomsoever may be in possession of the estate, that in case of any schism, on account of our sins,* taking place in the Church of God, and that by violence any person, of whatsoever nation or rank he may be, should undertake to despoil her of her privileges and property, that immediately, under pain of being disinherited, he will hasten (unless he should be a heretic, which God forbid) to offer, at the feet of the Holy Father, his person, power and wealth, for the purpose of suppressing the schism, and preventing the spoliation of the honors and property of the Church.”

* “Que si en la Iglesia de Dios, por nuestros pecados naciere alguno cisma,” etc. *Coleccion Diplom.*, num. cxxvi.

In well considering this solicitude for the temporal existence of the Holy See, one would say that the Revealer of the Globe had foreseen the heresy which was one day to issue from the monastery of the Augustinians of Wittenburg, and the terrible perturbation by which so many nations would be detached from spiritual unity. This very large defection may well lead to the fear that the schism would become established even in the city of Rome, where, in fact, it tried to introduce itself. In such an occurrence the mayoralazgo would have been a powerful aid, as it ought to amount, annually, to more than twenty-five million maravedis.

The Admiral wished, further, that his heir should build a church in the *Vega Real* of Hispaniola, in honor of the IMMACULATE CONCEPTION of the Blessed Virgin, under the title of *Santa Maria de la Concepcion*; that he should found a well-organized hospital; and that he should also found a faculty of theology, composed of four chairs, which were to be specially destined for the instruction of those who would devote themselves to the conversion of the Indians, with the obligation on the part of his heir, when the revenues of the estate would permit it, to increase the number of chairs and subsidies for evangelical laborers for the Indies.

In this testamentary act the whole soul of Columbus is reflected. In all his disposals it is seen that he wishes to have the course of his constant ideas continued after his death, and from the depth of his tomb to have the real objects of his life attained, — objects so great in his eyes that his Discoveries were only the means and the preparation for them. Thus: —

To pay tithe to God in His poor.

To deliver the Holy Sepulchre.

To secure the temporal independence of the Pope.

To comfort the sick.

To labor for the conversion of the Indians.

Such were the objects the Messenger of the Cross had proposed to himself; and he requires that his heir, and

consequently his continuator, should accomplish this glorious task.

This sole institution of mayorazgo appears to us to be the best answer that can be made to those who retrospectively accuse this illustrious Christian of avarice and ambition. Disinterestedness is to himself so natural, that he supposes it in his heir; and if he recommends to him the amassing of riches, it is in order that he may the more efficaciously expend them to the advantage of the Church.

Nobody has hitherto sufficiently remarked this zeal for the house of the Lord with which this servitor of God was inflamed.

Has any other layman ever devoted himself to the Church with such ardor? The self-renouncement, the complete self-abnegation, and all the sentiments of Columbus, — were they not truly those of an Apostle? What more could a saint have done, if he had been Grand Admiral and Viceroy, than to give his days, his nights, his repose, his dangers, his privations, his arrangements, and those of his children, to the Catholic Church, and in preparing, in his mayorazgo, an extreme resource for the necessities of the Sovereign Pontiff, in case of attack or dispossession?

Has any other Christian ever manifested more enduring solicitude for the glory of the Gospel, the redemption of the Holy Sepulchre, and the dignity of the Pontificate? Has any man ever made a more complete sacrifice of the fruit of his labors? Not only did Columbus give assurance to the Papacy of the coöperation of his mayorazgo, and the arms of his heirs, but he was willing to go so far as, in case of need, to dispossess, to disinherit wholly, his descendants, in order to save the independence and the authority of the Holy See!

SECTION VI.

Notwithstanding the declared wish of the Queen, the Admiral had to spend the months of March, April, and a

part of May, in providing himself the things necessary for the colony, as well as those for the new expedition. His active perseverance succeeded in frustrating the studied inaction of the director of marine, and in surmounting the obstacles thrown in his way by the malevolence of the bureaux, in such a manner, that at the end of May there were at the port of San Lucar six caravels ready to sail. But this approaching departure, which was a kind of interior triumph, exasperated the spleen of Fonseca and his creatures. Until then no offence had been offered to the Admiral but indirectly and cautiously; it was resolved to try gross and public insult.

A certain Jew, who found it convenient to receive baptism, Ximeno Breviesca, who had become a paymaster, and wished to advance rapidly in the esteem and support of Fonseca, undertook the task.

On many occasions this Ximeno sought to brave and offend the Admiral. The day of sailing he followed him to the port, abusing him in the grossest manner. It appears even that he dared to follow him on board, and there provoke him with his outrageous abuse. It is well known that at the moment of embarking the Admiral always recommended himself more especially to God and to the Blessed Virgin, and disposed himself for his voyage with particular acts of piety. His heart, at such moments, superabounded with Christian charity; he was therefore ready to pardon, and, consequently, to bear injuries. But this day the offence was so grievous, so intolerable by its persistence and bravado, that the old mariner remembered what he owed to his rank as Admiral. Impunity this time may be attended with disastrous consequences. The offence was given in the presence of the whole squadron, of the crowd on the quay, of some bandits and other criminals who were on board, — all these would take his patience for pusillanimity and cowardice. At the moment of departure it became, perhaps, necessary for the safety of the ships and the maintenance of discipline, to prove on the spot that age had not

reduced his vigor, and that he knew how to make his person respected as well as to have his orders executed.

The patriarch of the ocean made a step towards his insulter, and with his fist dealt a blow on his impudent face. The miserable wretch fell down, stunned. The Admiral limited himself to giving a few kicks to this vile snarler, who fled in the midst of hootings, concealing, under his humiliation and forced tears, his secret joy; for from that moment his fortune was made.

It is undeservedly that writers of a particular school have been pleased to consider the chastisement inflicted on Ximeno by the Admiral as a mark of his ungovernable temper. It was quite simply an instance of the police on shipboard. Columbus did not yield to hastiness or to the excitement of self-love. He did what he had to do, according to the custom of the seamen of his time and the necessity of the moment.

Whatever had been the behavior of Columbus in this circumstance, the most consummate prudence could not have preserved him from the snare laid for him with an infernal cunning. If he limited himself to having Ximeno chased by his squires, he would seem to be distrustful of his own strength. This moderation would kill him morally; he would lose his personal ascendancy over the squadron, and over the malefactors it transported. This was just what his enemies wanted. If he himself chastised the insolence, — had he given only a blow, — there was sufficient matter to accuse him of corporal violence, of rage, and of brutality. By this act alone all the accusations of Father Boil, of Pedro Margarit, and of Juan Aguado, in regard to his violence and cruelty, would be proved beyond doubt.

This occurrence, which was brought about by Fonseca, was amply commented on at Court through the care taken by him and his partisans. Since even on the soil of Spain, in a port of the Catholic Sovereigns, the Admiral thus treated one of their officers, what could he not have done in those distant regions, where his authority was exercised

without control? Ximeno, the infamous satellite of Fonseca, became the object of the complaisance and favor of the Court. The insulter was pitied, consoled and indemnified for his mishap. The insulted was reproved by public opinion. He was no longer there to defend himself. He had weighed anchor, receiving outrage for a farewell, and bearing with him a presentiment of the blame with which he would be loaded in his absence.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

Columbus takes a new Route for his Third Voyage. — Dead Calms of the Torrid Zone. — The Heat spoils the Provisions, etc. — Excessive Thirst makes him change his Course. — Island of Trinidad descried. — Discovery of the New Continent. — The Orinoco. — The Gulf of Paria. — Happy Escape from Dangers. — Departs for Hispaniola.

SECTION I.

ON the thirtieth of May, 1498, the six caravels opened sail in the port of San Lucar. The Admiral started on the voyage, placing himself under the patronage of the Most Holy Trinity, whose august name he vowed to give the first land he would discover.

It was no longer islands that Columbus sought. He hoped this voyage would almost equal his first one in its importance. He first stood to the south, in order to avoid a French fleet that was cruising about Cape St. Vincent

On the seventh of June, he anchored at Porto Santo, where he heard mass, and took in wood and water. Thence he stood for Madeira, where the governor, and the greater portion of the inhabitants, who were already acquainted with him, received him with great honors. He next made for Gomera, and thence continued his route.

Always solicitous for the colony, when he came to the island of Ferro he despatched three vessels directly to

Hispaniola with supplies, under the command of his brother-in-law Pedro de Arana, of his cousin the Genoese Juan Antonio Colombo, and of Alonzo Sanchez de Carvajal. He carefully pointed out their course, and the nearest way. They were alternately to have the command, each one for a week.

Then, with his other three ships, he turned his course to the torrid zone, in the name of the Most Holy Trinity.

An attack of gout, which for four days was attended with fever, came to add to his troubles. But the energy of his will overcoming the violence of his pains, he did not cease from directing personally the voyage. Leaving the barren island of Buena Vista, the Admiral stood to the south-west. He persevered in keeping this direction, though the force of the currents, which was north and north-east, greatly retarded his progress. Still, he desired to keep this route until he would cross the equinoctial line, when he intended to steer for the *terra firma* of the Indies in the West.

On the thirteenth of July, the wind suddenly ceased, the ocean became like a mirror, and the sails hung flaccid from their masts. The vessels remained almost motionless. The crews panted under the heat of a vertical sun, unmitigated by any refreshing breeze. They were then in the regions of the calms, unknown until that time, and they became quite dejected.

The first day the air became like a furnace, and the tar melted; but happily the next day some thick clouds shrouded the heavens, and some showers of rain fell in large drops. Still the heat remained suffocating. The provisions began rapidly to spoil, and even the salt meat became putrid, the wheat became parched as if with fire, and the staves and hoops shrank from the wine and water casks, some of which leaked and others burst.

This excessive heat continued for eight days, and the absence of wind rendered it impossible to escape from it. Columbus addressed himself to God, who had so many times aided him in his dangers and difficulties. He remem-

bered his having found a great change in the atmosphere every time he had passed a hundred leagues to the west of the Azores, at the point designated by the famous line of Papal Demarkation. "After that," he says, "I resolved, if it should please the Lord to send me wind and a propitious time, to leave the latitudes in which I found myself, to push no farther to the south, but, without retrograding, to sail to the west, until I would find the temperature I had met with in the latitude of the Canaries, and then steer to the south."

The event justified his expectations. In advancing to the west, he found the atmosphere to become milder, and more serene accordingly as he approached the meridian already mentioned. But the wine-casks were empty, and there remained but a single barrel of water in each of the three ships. Being in danger of perishing from thirst, notwithstanding his regret for having to depart from his intended route, he made sail for the Caribbean islands, hoping to be able there to procure provisions and water, and refit his ships. The distress of the crews was frightful. In the midst of the most alarming apprehensions, Alonzo Perez Nizzardo, on the thirty-first of July, discerned three summits of mountains which appeared united at the same base.

It was the land desired!

It appeared distant about fifteen leagues; and by a wonderful, if not prodigious singularity, seemed at that distance to present the mysterious emblem of the Trinity, whose name the Admiral had vowed to bestow on it! Hence the name he gave it, of *Trinidad*.

SECTION II.

The strange circumstances of this discovery, its three summits appearing to rise from the same mountain, and recalling to mind the vow made by the Admiral to give the august name of the Trinity (Trinidad) to the first land he would discover, have stricken with astonishment the cotemporary

chroniclers and historians. Muñoz, who had under his eyes the narrations and the documents, informs us that Columbus attributed this discovery to a signal favor from God.* He regarded as miraculous the circumstances, the time, the place, and the aspect of these three summits, — a sight in so intimate a relation with the design he had formed of consecrating to the Holy Trinity the first land he would discover.

According to his invariable custom, he planted a very large Cross on the shore, where he glorified the name of Jesus Christ.

After advancing further, the Admiral noticed between the island of Trinidad and a neighboring land, which he took for an island, a violent current, accompanied with a strange and terrible sound. “The water,” says he, “came from east to west, with as much velocity as the Guadalquivir when swollen by floods.” He saw that this direction of from east to west continued at all hours without interruption, with a velocity of two miles and a half an hour. He seriously feared that he could not advance, on account of the shoals indicated by the boiling and raging, nor turn back, on account of the violence of the current. While at a late hour of the night sleeplessness, inquietude, and his desire to make observations, retained him on board, he suddenly heard a terrible roaring from the south. He beheld the sea which came from the west forming, as it were, a hill of water as high as the masts of the ships, and advance towards him. To its uproar was added the tumult of other currents. However, this liquid mass lowered itself, lifting up high the caravel, and passed on to the mouth of the strait, where it stood for some time struggling against the counter-current of the strait. The Admiral felt the imminence of the danger so great for several weeks after, that he was painfully affected by it. All thought they would be lost without resource. The next day he had soundings made by the boats. They found a depth of six or seven

* Muñoz. *Hist. del Nuevo Mundo*, lib. vi., sec. 23.

fathoms. They also found that there were two currents, — one to enter, the other to come out. “It pleased the Lord,” he says, “to give me a good wind, and I traversed the interior of this *embouchure*, after which I found a tranquil expanse again.” The Admiral gave to this dangerous pass the name of *Serpent’s Mouth* (Boca del Sierpe).

SECTION III.

It has been generally admitted that the first point of the new continent perceived by Columbus, was the coast of Paria. This, however, is an error refuted in advance by the Admiral himself, in his report to the Sovereigns.

It is not uninteresting to point out precisely the first place that presented itself to the longing eyes of the Europeans. It can be done with certainty from the account given by Columbus himself of the third voyage.

Before leaving the Boca del Sierpe, the Admiral had at his right, a little forward of the prow, the last western cape of Trinidad, and on the left, as much before as behind, the superior extremity of the delta of the Orinoco, — an immense river, which discharges itself by seven great mouths and forty smaller issues, over an extent of about fifty leagues, which they divide into islands and islets of various extent. A thick and vigorous vegetation here displayed its profuse prodigality. It was therefore impossible to avoid taking for islands and islets these portions of land, then half submerged, and forming numberless canals, and among which no regular current indicated the discharge of a river.

It was, then, to these masses covered with sombre verdure, appearing to arise from the waters and gradually bounding the horizon, that the Admiral first directed his attention. Although there was no index to make him suppose that these islands were formed by the *embouchure* of a river, he had a feeling something uncommon, strange and inexplicable in regard to the nature of these islands; for, far from giving a collected name to them, he designated the

country by the name of *Tierra de Gracia* (Land of Grace), because the grace of God had alone conducted him there; and he did not speak of islands in this part of his report.

The first part of the New Continent that necessarily gained the attention of Columbus, when he wished to double Point Jeacus, is comprised between Cape del Moro and Cape de Medio, in the delta of the Orinoco. The vegetation was so gigantic that Columbus inferred it was not under the predominant action of saline humidity, and that the influence of the seas here yielded to the abundance of fresh water, and that he at last saw *terra firma*.

To satisfy himself in regard to the character of it, he tacked about towards the interior coast of Trinidad, and at a distance of twelve leagues perceived to the north-east the top of a promontory, which he considered to be a continuation of the Land of Grace. This was afterwards proved to be the case. On examining the sea-water he found it to have a fresh taste, and that it was good for drinking. He soon was in a current that pushed him to the north-east, and advancing further, he perceived, near Cape Lapa, an *embouchure* still more narrow than that of the Serpent's Mouth, having the same noises and turbulence of the waves.

With the design of finding another outlet, as well as to open a communication with the inhabitants of this country, he steered along the western coast. The more he advanced the sweeter he found the water, and the better for drinking. After sailing eighteen leagues along the coast, he sent boats on shore. They found recent traces of people, much cultivated land, fruit-trees in bearing, and saw multitudes of monkeys. But they could see no human being. The Indians are, from their infancy, so accustomed to the exercise of their principal sensual faculties, that they acquire a superiority of sight, of hearing, and of smelling, which enables them to perceive strangers before they are seen themselves, to hear their steps and recognize their tracks, and thus they are enabled to escape them. So it was in Gracia the same

as it was in Trinidad; the Spaniards were unable to find any of the natives.

This day being Sunday, Columbus ordered it to be solemnized on that new land, the possession of which he took in the form he was accustomed to. A large Cross was raised on the most prominent spot of the beach, and the sacred name of our Redeemer resounded on this unknown shore. In this ceremony, the Admiral was represented by his majordomo, Pedro de Terreros, for an acute ophthalmia forced him to remain in his cabin. The first European, then, that landed on the New Continent was Pedro de Terreros.

The next day the Admiral neared the coast. A small canoe, with five men, came towards the caravel nearest the shore. The captain called them, and made a sign that he wanted to go ashore. They understood him, and approached nearer to receive him. The captain, in jumping into the canoe, designedly overturned it. The Indians wished to escape by swimming, but they were all, except one, secured by the Spaniards, and brought to the Admiral.

These men were finely formed, and free and graceful in their movements. Their color recalled their origin. The Admiral gave them hawks' bells, glass trinkets, and sugar, which delighted them exceedingly, and then ordered them to be taken to the shore. Agreeably to what he expected, their countrymen, informed of the good treatment they had received, soon came in crowds to the strand. All wanted to come to the caravels. They brought with them bread, fresh water, a green kind of drink, a kind of wine, together with bucklers, bows, and even poisoned arrows. They gazed at the Spaniards with unspeakable astonishment, and found the smell from them very grateful. The next day he proceeded eight leagues westward, to a point which he called *Aguja*, or the Needle, and found the country beautiful and the shore very populous. "I cast anchor," he says, "in order to have more leisure to contemplate this verdure, this beautiful country and its inhabitants."

The beauty and amenity of this place was such that he

named it *The Gardens*. Many Indians came, on the part of their king, to beg him to come ashore. Columbus could not, on account of his ophthalmia, comply with this invitation. His apparent indifference redoubled their curiosity. They were tall of stature, and had dark hair, which they partly concealed by brilliant bandages which they wore round the head. Their only clothing was pieces of cloth around the waist, those of the women being much longer than the ones worn by the men. The greater number of them had their necks ornamented with plates of gold. Some women wore, also, bracelets of fine pearls. The Admiral endeavored to learn where they found the gold. All answered that it was in a very high country, towards the west, but not far distant; still, they would beseech him not to go there, because the natives were cannibals. Columbus likewise inquired of them where they got the pearls, and they answered it was from a country in the north-west.

Notwithstanding his desire to verify, himself, the places designated, Columbus had to renounce it, the pressing necessities of the colony filling him with inquietude, as the supplies he sent to Hispaniola would become damaged more and more. The caravel he commanded was not proper for explorations, on account of her great size. His health was impaired by continual watchings, and his eyes were in a state bordering on blindness. So he felt it necessary to make for Hispaniola, whence he could send his brother Bartholomew to continue his discoveries.

He steered to the west until he found there were only three fathoms of water. He cast anchor, and sent a light caravel called the *Correo*, or *Courier*, to see if the passage was open. The *Courier* came to the middle of a very large gulf, which was surrounded by four other smaller gulfs, into which were discharged the waters of several rivers. The water was very fresh. "I never drank such," says the Admiral. He called this kind of interior sea the Gulf of *Paria*, or of Pearls. He expected to find a strait to the

north, for there was no issue to the west or the south ; but in all these points he found himself surrounded by land. So, on the eleventh of August, he turned back on his course, to attempt the passage of the dangerous strait on the north-east, which he had prudently avoided on the fifth, by which he would be enabled to return to the Gardens. The next day he anchored near Cape Paria, in a port which he named *Puerto de Galos*, from a species of monkey that abounded there.

SECTION IV.

On the fourteenth of August he approached the strait.

The north-eastern extremity of Trinidad does not face the south-eastern Cape of Paria directly. Between the extremity of the island and the point of the main land there are several islands, between which the outlets are not navigable for ships ; but between the largest of these islands and the American continent there is a pass of about a league and a half in breadth, — the only one by which a passage can be made to the Caribbean Sea, — and a fearful passage it must be.

During the months of July and August, the heavy rains and floods that swell the rivers discharging themselves into the Gulf of Paria give the currents of fresh water a powerful impulse. This body of rain and river water rushes against the islands which oppose its issue, and, from the conflict between the body of fresh water struggling for an outlet, and the tide of salt water struggling to enter, there results a concussion loud and violent, or a truly turbulent sea, foaming and roaring as if breaking over rocks.

If for entering the Gulf of Paria Columbus needed the aid of Providence, its assistance to enable him to come out of it was no less needed.

A little before noon, the three caravels came to the pass. A frightful commotion was seen in the waves. The river water pushed towards the sea was opposed by the tide of

salt water rushing with all its force towards the gulf. The waves arose as high as mountains, and with a roaring that frightened the most courageous of the men.

There being no wind, the sailors could not use their sails, and they feared they would be cast, by the violence of the currents, against shoals, or be wrecked against the rocks on one or other of the coasts. The Admiral declared that if they should succeed in extricating themselves from the danger, they may well say they were delivered from the mouth of the dragon. Hence the name of *Boca del Dragon*, which it still bears.

Notwithstanding the imminence of the peril, the Admiral, availing himself of a land breeze, made the caravels proceed. Scarcely were the vessels in this kind of a terrible defile than the wind immediately fell; and now they expected every moment to be cast against the rocks. Columbus turned to his Protector, and did not invoke Him in vain. At the moment of the greatest danger invisible aid came to him from Above. A wind arose with force, and the fresh water swelled up in waves like hills. "At length God willed that this same fresh water should overpower the salt water, and bear the vessels forward." It was by the force of the wind that their safety was effected. But such was the assurance Columbus felt, and the confidence he had in "the mercy of the Divine Majesty," that in that solemn moment he occupied himself tranquilly with hydrographic observations. Accustomed to the prodigies of divine aid, he does not mention this marvellous succor in his report of the voyage.

As soon as the caravels had escaped from the foaming "Dragon's Mouth," Columbus gave public expression to his gratitude. He thanked the Lord loudly for having delivered him from the abyss.

Sailing to the north-east, he recognized the exterior coast of Paria, and signalized, in front of Cape Three Peaks, the three islands, which he named *The Witnesses*, no doubt in allusion to the three miraculous events of his third voyage,

which was undertaken in the name of the adorable Trinity. Afterwards, leaving to the north-east two islands, which, in honor of the Blessed Virgin, he named one *Conception*, the other *Assumption*, he arrived at Margarita, and thence came to Cubagua, since celebrated for its pearl fisheries. From this island he continued his route to Hispaniola.

CHAPTER II.

His Speculations in relation to the Places he had visited. — His Discovery of the Equatorial Swelling. — His ideas about the Terrestrial Paradise. — His Discovery of the great Equatorial Current. — Great Scientific Conquests result from this Voyage. — Arrives at the Island of Beata, where his brother Bartholomew comes to meet him.

SECTION I.

IN none of his former explorations had such strange circumstances and appearances engaged the attention of Columbus, as those into the causes of which he now sought to penetrate. In spite of the convulsive contractions of his inflamed eyelids, the heaviness produced by his sleeplessness, and the painful twinges of his gout, he tried, at certain hours, to examine with a rapid scrutiny these grand displays of nature. The qualities of the soil, the vigor of the vegetation, the color of the natives, — which was not black, as in Africa, in the same latitude, — the mildness of the temperature, the changes of the constellations, the movements of the waves, the direction of the currents, and the abundance of fresh water in the midst of the sea, raised in his mind a number of questions and of ideas.

From certain traits of cosmographic physiognomy, imperceptible to all other observers, he recognized the face of one of the grand geographical divisions of the globe, and the choicest part of one of the principal continents. By his sole inductions from spontaneous apperception, and impressions which he could not explain, he felt convinced that the part of the earth in which he then was staying was more elevated than that whence he came. It seemed to him as if he was climbing what may be called the back

of the ocean, like a mountain ; he felt assured that he had approached the highest part of the globe.

Already this simple assertion excelled, with all the loftiness of genius, all the teachings of the science of his time. Columbus was on the way for a grand discovery ; namely, the equatorial swelling.

In a communication addressed to the Sovereigns, the Admiral says, clearly, that it is believed the earth is round ; but that, from what he has seen, he conjectures it is not perfectly spherical ; that it has rather the form of a pear, very round, except the part that has the stem, and that this part is nearer the skies. In fact, the equatorial swelling measures a height of twenty-one kilometres, or about five times the height of Mont Blanc.

Columbus says Aristotle placed the most culminating point of the earth under the Antarctic Pole ; that other *savants* had opposed his opinion, and placed it under the Arctic Pole ; but that, for his own part, he judges that the swelling of the globe is towards the equator. He excuses the errors of his predecessors, as they could have had no knowledge of the lands which he had only recently discovered. He says he does not pronounce on the geodetical constitution of the other hemisphere, as he has not visited it.

From the consideration of the equatorial swelling, Columbus passes to other scientific speculations. He tries to seize on the historical character of the country. He endeavors to find what may be the destination of a region so different from those he had formerly traversed, or that had been described by travellers. This country, being the nearest to the heavens, and consequently the first that received the sun's rays, Columbus asks himself if this sublime elevation, and the delightfulness of its temperature, did not indicate the primitive sojourn of the first man, the terrestrial Paradise ? He does not say that he found the site of this place of delights ; but he supposes that at the culminating point of the equatorial swelling this place ought to be found ; but that nobody can find it, save by the Divine permission.

What confirms him in this opinion, is that gigantic river whose immense volume cannot be compared to any of those that are known. He presumes that this river, whose waters are so abundant as to freshen the sea water to so great a distance, is one of the four rivers flowing from the terrestrial Paradise mentioned in the Scriptures.

SECTION II.

Whatever may have been the error of Columbus on the subject of the terrestrial Paradise, the ingeniousness of his inductions amply made up for the imperfection or inadequacy of his data. Larger apperceptions than his could not be drawn from what he had discovered. His judgments on present or apparent things, though yet unknown, are always based on cosmographic facts, and on profound considerations.

Dating from this period, the Revealer of the Globe felt certain that he had touched a land about which Europe had no information. Therefore he did not believe that he was in Asia, but on a continent totally unknown until that time.

As from the quality of the water he inferred, or divined, the character of the land, so from the movement of the waters he divined one of the general laws of the globe; namely, the great flood of the ocean, or the equatorial current. He asserted that the waters of the ocean, like the heavens, move from east to west, which is the opposite of the earth's moving, or revolving, from west to east. He also asserted, that in this meridional quarter the course of the pelagian current was accelerated; for, even on the day of Our Lady of August, — the feast of the Patroness of the Seas, — between the hour of mass and that of complin they, with a light breeze, made a progress of sixty-four marine leagues.

SECTION III.

During this voyage, in which Columbus discovered so many things in so short a time (from the first to the eighteenth of August), his reasoning and inductive faculties show themselves to be still superior to his discoveries; he sees vastly more with his intellect than by the progress of his caravels. What he perceives by his corporal sight is nothing, when compared to his intuitive perceptions. This man, bowed down by suffering, and almost blind, saw everything and observed everything, objectively and subjectively: the earth and its productions; the air, and its qualities, its temperature, and its influences. Thus, then, as he expected before his departure, this voyage, undertaken in the name of the Most Holy Trinity, was no less important than his first one. He now returned, after having made the peaceable conquest of three grand verities, of three cosmographic facts, which will ever be of utility to science:—

The existence of a new continent.

The equatorial swelling.

The great oceanic current.

The least of these three discoveries would have secured immortality for the discoverer. To this revelation of the grand laws of the globe were joined, multiplied by his genius, some apperceptions, curious and very important for the interests of science.

In addition to this acquisition made for the advantage of humanity, the Revealer of the Globe, from that time, possessed a scientific certitude which was not yet based on any testimony or observation, but which was no less firmly fixed in his mind. He knew, without our being able to tell how, that beyond that continent from which there came so large a river there was still an ocean.

Such was the importance of this third voyage, that there remained no longer any grand discovery to be made. The Messenger of the Cross left but very few for future genera-

tions. Thanks to him, the whole world was thenceforth open to the investigations of man. For three centuries nobody has discovered in the laws of nature anything broader, more profound, or more fundamental for science. For three centuries nobody has derived from any voyage as many intellectual acquisitions.

It is to be remarked that the Report, or Relation, of his Third Voyage, so much commented on and criticised by a certain coterie, was not a report quietly elaborated in the silence of the closet, but a veritable extemporary production. It was written at sea. The Admiral, from his sick-bed in his cabin, dictated it to one of his secretaries, Diego de Alvarado, or Bernard de Ibarra. This document bears the character of improvisation, giving utterance to the abundance of his thoughts. The condensed erudition of Columbus would be noticed there, if it did not totally disappear before the grandeur of the syntheses, the immensity of the views, the profoundness of the revelations, and the new speculations offered by him to the reflections of his cotemporaries. This document contains intrinsic proofs of its being written during the passage from Margarita to Hispaniola.

SECTION IV.

The Admiral trimmed his sails for San Domingo, a seaport or city which Don Bartholomew was to establish in his absence. But the currents and the east winds bore him from it; and when he thought he was at the mouth of the Ozema, he found himself at the little island of Beata. At first he was astonished at this error in his calculation, but on reflection he found it to be a confirmation and proof of his discovery of the great pelagian current. Fearing to be a long time delayed, he sent a boat to the shore, where an Indian was found who took charge of a letter for the Adelantado, and was to take it to him across the mountains. The Admiral sailed for the port, and in a few days per-

ceived a caravel coming to join him. Don Bartholomew hastened to his aid, and, alas! his devotedness was never more needed.

Columbus arrived at Hispaniola pale, emaciated, almost blind, and needing repose for body and mind, and still ingratitude and crime, which during his absence had put the island in a flame, did not permit him to enjoy an hour of quietude and restorative tranquillity.

CHAPTER III.

Events that occurred in Hispaniola during the Admiral's Absence.
— He forbids bad Christians from working in the Mines. — Discontent of the Castilians. — The Adelantado goes to Xaragua. — Revolts.

SECTION I.

TO understand the circumstances under which Columbus resumed the reins of his government, it will be necessary to take a glance at the events that took place in Hispaniola during his absence from the tenth of March, 1496, until the thirtieth of August, 1498.

The Admiral, on leaving the island, promised the colonists to send them timely aid. The three caravels commanded by Pedro Alonzo Niño were, indeed, charged with provisions, but from the connivance of the marine in regard to their quality, and the little care bestowed on their preservation during the voyage, the greater part of them spoiled, and consequently became useless. From this time until the Admiral had sent the two caravels under the orders of Pedro Coronel, fourteen months had elapsed without the unfortunate colonists receiving any news from the mother country. They believed themselves forgotten, and accused the Admiral of their ruin. During this time their clothing and their implements, tools and utensils, had worn out, and they had no means of replacing them. Humiliations were added to privations and weariness. The mettlesome and hectoring hidalgos, and the young men who came to amass gold, were indignant at seeing themselves in rags, or wearing garments made from the barks of trees or from the cotton of the natives. Their indignation at length became

converted into hatred. In all their misfortunes they did not forget venting their wrath against the Genoese braggart, that bigot who had no regard for the noble sons of Castile. They cursed the Sovereigns for having placed them under the government of that foreigner. Their hopes about gold became frustrated; for, notwithstanding the discovery of the rich mines of Hayna, the Adelantado did not permit them to labor at them.

This interdiction merits an explanation.

Columbus, seeing that the covetous idlers by whom he was followed, in his second voyage, rushed on Hispaniola as on a prey, tyrannizing over the Indians, robbing them of the little gold they had, and trampling on all the laws of Christianity and humanity, had a horror of their coöperation in his work. He wished that no impure hands should pollute that gold which he was going to offer to Jesus Christ, and by which he hoped one day to redeem His tomb. He desired that only innocent hands should extract from the bowels of the earth this pure homage of faith. As in the old law, for the construction of the tabernacle and the making of ornaments for the high priest, artisans animated with the spirit of wisdom * were to be chosen, so the Revealer of the Globe intended that only true Christians alone should enjoy the happiness of coöperating in this act of Catholic piety.

Even before the arrival of the Europeans the Indians attributed a certain value to gold. They travelled and made voyages to procure it, bought and sold it among themselves by means of exchanges, and performed some superstitious ceremonies to find its best beds. During the twenty days that preceded their labors, they separated themselves from their wives, and lived in continency, imposing certain fasts and other mortifications on themselves. This custom was turned to advantage by Columbus. He declared distinctly to the idlers who came to Hispaniola to seek gold, that it would be shameful for Christians to do less to procure it than the

* Exodus xxxv : 31, 35.

pagan and uneducated Indians did. He told them that in order to utilize doubly their labors, they ought, before commencing to dig for it, cease from their violent practices, reform their dissolute lives, repent sincerely of their sins, and confess them, put themselves in the state of grace, live in a state of continency, impose fasts on themselves and do penance,—and that thus reconciled with God, their labors would be blessed, and they would more abundantly obtain temporal goods. Accordingly, he gave permission for the working of the mines only to those whose regularity of life and manners was attested by the priests or the religious of the colony.

This measure wounded to the quick the hidalgos who were not able to go back with the commissary Aguado. They expected that in the absence of the Admiral, his brother, the Adelantado, who was less scrupulous, would give them permission to go to the mines. But Don Bartholomew carried out strictly the orders of the Viceroy.

The distress and discontent became greater, and increased from day to day. The studied negligence of the bureau of marine had thus attained its object. To prevent the supplies from coming to Hispaniola would lead to revolt, in giving to the power of numbers the force of misery and despair. It was expected that by embittering the minds and incensing the pride of the Castilians, the government of the Adelantado would become impossible. But obstacles and perils served only to increase the energy and activity of Don Bartholomew. Wherever he came he enforced obedience. So, notwithstanding the distress occasioned by want, and the general ill-will, he had a fortress built near the mines of Hayna, which was named *San Christobal* (St. Christopher). Another fortress, much larger, was erected on the right bank of the Ozema, and named *San Domingo*. This fortress was built conformably to directions issued by the Admiral from Cadiz, and brought by the pilot Pedro Alonzo Niño.

All the parts of the island visited by the Spaniards may

be considered as having submitted to them ; but the most western part, equally distant from Isabella and San Domingo, the state of Xaragua, remained independent. This kingdom, over which reigned the grand cacique Behechio, neither attacked nor recognized the Castilian authority. Since the capture of the proud Caonabo, his wife, the celebrated Anacoano, "the Golden Flower," had retired to the residence of her brother Behechio, over whom she exercised great influence. The inaction of this cacique has been attributed to her influence, though his own elevated sentiments disposed him favorably towards the Spaniards. Still, Don Bartholomew considered it his duty to delay no longer the subjugation of this kingdom, — the only one that had not acknowledged the sovereignty of Castile. To his wish of not leaving the example of such independence to the caciques who had submitted, was added that of employing usefully, and maintaining in discipline, men whom want of employment had demoralized. The Adelantado marched towards Xaragua prepared for war, without desiring it, and under the pretence of going on an exploring expedition. Behechio, very susceptible in his pride, on getting news of this visit, immediately collected an army of forty thousand men, which, divided into cohorts, followed, without being seen, the march of the Spaniards. But soon, by the counsels of his sister, "the Golden Flower," he recalled his troops.

On the invitation of the cacique, Don Bartholomew repaired to the royal residence, where he was received with distinguished honors. A grand entertainment awaited him, which was graced by the presence of the beautiful, charming, and gifted Anacoano. On this occasion, in a friendly conversation with the cacique, the Adelantado skilfully induced him to agree to pay tribute to the Catholic Sovereigns, and insure their protection. As there were no gold mines known to be in the kingdom of Behechio, Don Bartholomew smoothed the difficulty in accepting tribute in provisions, which was not onerous for the cacique.

SECTION II.

While the Adelantado was away with his caravel to get provisions for the colony, some malcontents, taking advantage of his absence, attempted to ruin his authority and seize on the ruins of the government of the island. Their chief was Francisco Roldan, a former servitor of the Admiral, who had been raised by the Viceroy to the dignity of *alcalde-major*, or chief judge of the colony!

Since the departure of the commissary, with whom he had a secret understanding, he was filled with the idea of seizing on the government of the colony. Aguado, having recognized in him the stuff for a traitor, informed him of the disposition of the marine at Seville, and especially of the hatred of Fonseca for the Admiral. He knew that Pedro Margarit, and the deserters leagued against the Columbuses, had, on their return to Spain, received no punishment.

To carry out his machinations he addressed himself to all the disaffected of the island, whether Spaniards or natives, who soon formed a strong party. He pretended that his opposition was not to the Admiral, but to the Adelantado, who, he said, exercised unlawful authority. He contrived to procure arms for his partisans, and, after having committed great excesses, they came out in open revolt. Roldan meditated nothing less than the assassination of the Adelantado, whom he considered the chief obstacle to his ambition.

As the rebels were one day loitering on the coast of Xaragua, they perceived, with alarm, in the distance, three ships making their appearance. They were the three vessels the Admiral had detached from his squadron at the Canaries, and which he had sent in all haste to the colony, under the command of Pedro de Arana, of Juan Antonio Colombo, and of Alonzo Sanchez de Carvajal.

The caravels having cast anchor, the rebels thought themselves lost, thinking that a strong force had come to make

them give an account of themselves. But Roldan comprehended, at first sight, that these vessels, a long time at sea, had no doubt missed their way, and that the misdeeds in the island were unknown on board. He dared to present himself as charged by the Adelantado with the supervision of the country, and demanded arms and provisions for his men. The captains willingly complied with his demand. The rebels were thus put in communication with the crews. The rebels boasted to the sailors of the easy and sensual lives they led in Xaragua, and urged them to desertion. These proceedings were not noticed until a little after their occurrence, and the crews were kept close on board. Carvajal, hoping to bring Roldan back to his duty, went to confer with him. Roldan declared his good sentiments towards the Admiral; that he had taken up arms only against the Adelantado; and that he had even prepared a letter for his old master, whose arrival he impatiently expected.

The three captains, being of opinion that the winds and the currents may yet for a long time delay the arrival of the caravels at San Domingo, agreed to put ashore the artificers and others who had come in the royal pay, in order that, under the conduct of Juan Antonio Colombo, they may go by land to San Domingo, and thus save time and provisions. But scarcely had these men, to the number of forty, well armed and equipped, landed, than they all, except seven, passed to the flag of Roldan. Nevertheless, with these seven brave men, Juan Antonio Colombo, a man truly worthy of his illustrious family, ventured to go to Roldan, to represent to him the wrong he was doing to the Admiral, his benefactor, to the Sovereigns, and to the colony, of which he was the chief judge. His eloquence remained fruitless. Juan Antonio went on board the caravel, accompanied by the few who remained faithful, and set sail for San Domingo, with the brother-in-law of the Admiral, — the noble Pedro de Arana, — while Carvajal remained at anchor for some days longer, to try and bring the rebels back to their allegiance.

CHAPTER IV.

Proclamation of the Viceroy. — Permission given the Malcontents to return to Spain. — Promises of Pardon. — Defection of the Troops. — He cannot resort to Force. — Humiliations he has to endure. — Carvajal brings Roldan to an Arrangement with the Viceroy.

SECTION I.

ON his arrival, the Admiral issued a proclamation, which ratified all the administrative acts of the Adelantado, and mentioned the revolt of Roldan as the cause of the public calamities.

Carvajal, in presenting himself to the Admiral, represented the feelings of Roldan, without disguising the force at his disposal. In his judgment, it would be necessary to proceed with lenity and circumspection. The crews who returned with the Admiral were for the most part sick, in consequence of the fatigues of the voyage, and the influence of the new climate they were in. Among the old colonists, some were homesick, and others disposed to espouse the cause of the rebels. So, to assuage the general excitement, and conciliate the good-will of all, the Admiral issued another proclamation, offering permission to such as may desire it to return to Castile, in the five vessels that were nearly ready to put to sea. At the same time, he wrote to Miguel Ballester, commandant of the Fortress of Conception, to see Roldan, who held a force in that quarter, and to promise him, in his name, pardon and oblivion of the past; and even, if he required it, to give him this promise in writing, in order that he may come to San Domingo.

Some days after, Ballester, knowing that the rebels would

have a meeting at Bonao, went there. He found them full of arrogance. Roldan, treating with contempt the proffered pardon, haughtily replied that he would not accept it, having no need for it; that, on the contrary, he could, at his pleasure, sustain or ruin the authority of the Admiral himself. Playing the honest man, he declared he would listen to no proposition until he would have an account of the unfortunate Indians taken away from the district of Concepcion; that, with the force he had, it did not become him to listen to propositions, unless for his advantage; and that, above all, he would consent to treat with no person but Alonzo Sanchez Carvajal, who was an honest man.

Carvajal was sent anew to treat with the rebels; but they, becoming more arrogant in proportion as they knew the feebleness of the government, would not listen to him, although he was the commissary of their own choice. He, however, obtained an interview with the chiefs of the brutal horde. He delivered to Roldan a letter from the Admiral, in which his soul is reflected in as clear and simple a style as his heart. It was as follows:

“DEAR FRIEND, —

“My first care on arriving in this capital, after having embraced my brother, was to inquire about you. You cannot doubt that, next to my family, you have for a long time occupied the first place in my affections; and I have always counted so much on yours, that there is nothing in which I would not entirely have depended on you. Judge, therefore, of my grief when I learned that you were embroiled in a feud with the persons who are the nearest to me in the world, and who ought to be the dearest. Still, I have been consoled on being informed that you ardently desired my return. I flattered myself then that your first sentiments in regard to me were not changed, and I expected that, as soon as you would hear of my arrival, you would not delay coming to see me. Not seeing you appear, and thinking that you apprehended some re-

sentment on my part, I sent Ballester to you, to give you all the assurances that you could desire. The little success that attended that step has filled me with regret. And whence could that distrust come which you seem to have in me? At last, you demanded to have Carvajal sent to you. I send him. Open your heart to him, and tell him what I can do for you, to regain your confidence; but, in the name of God, remember what you owe to your country, to the Kings (our sovereign lords), to God, and to yourself; take care of your reputation, and judge of things more soundly than you have done in the past. Consider with attention the abyss you are digging under your feet, and no longer persist in a desperate resolution. I have represented you to their Highnesses as a man of the colony whom they may most rely upon; it concerns my honor and yours that a testimony so advantageous should not be belied by your conduct. Hasten, then, to show yourself again the man I formerly knew you to be. I have detained the ships that were all ready to sail, with the hope that, by a prompt and perfect submission, you will place me at liberty to confirm all the good things I have said of you. I pray God to have you in His holy keeping."

This language was so reassuring, this goodness so persuasive, that Roldan, Requelme, Mojica, and Gamez, the four principal chiefs, mounting on horseback, prepared to go with Carvajal to the Viceroy. But the troop of rebels, perceiving they were going to depart, opposed them, telling them that they should not come to terms without themselves, swearing that if there should be any agreement it should be in writing, and with their common consent.

At the request of Carvajal, the rebels put the conditions they required in writing. They were so harsh, so debasing for the government, that they seemed a mockery. It was all that could be expected from a gang of perverse men.

The brave Miguel Ballester, who had joined Carvajal, saw, like him, that these bandits sought only to prolong

their impunity for the tyranny they exercised on the poor Indians, whose defenders they pretended to be. He therefore wrote to the Admiral, beseeching him, cost what it would, to effect a compromise with these people, because the flame of revolt was secretly propagating itself, and he feared that even his own little troop, already diminished by some desertions, would pass to the rebels. Alas! these apprehensions were but too well founded. The Admiral, desiring to know the real force that could be opposed to the rebels, ordered all the men of San Domingo to appear under arms, that he may review them. A report was immediately circulated that they were to be led to Bonao against the rebels. Only seventy men responded to the call, and all these were not effective for service. One was without a horse, another without arms; some affected to be ill; and of the rest, more than half of them had relations among the rebels, or were disaffected to the service. Columbus saw that resort to arms would end only in prostrating the dignity and authority of his government. Hence moderation became a necessity; it was indispensably requisite to temporize skilfully, in order to open a way for some eventuality that would permit the reëstablishment of power.

Columbus immediately proclaimed permission, for all who desired it, to return to Spain. There were five vessels ready to go to sea, on board of which were the Indians made prisoners in a late insurrection. During three weeks he delayed their departure; but not one of the malcontents, so clamorous in crying for an end to their exile, thought now of leaving the island. At length, on the eighteenth of October, the order for departure was given.

SECTION II.

It was by these ships that the Admiral addressed to the Sovereigns an account of his discovery of *terra firma*, with a geographical chart of his voyage and a maritime chart of the route to be followed to arrive at the coast of Paria. As

he still suffered from his ophthalmia, he dictated his letter to his secretary, Bernard d'Ibarra. He confided to a gentleman named Arroyal, to present them to the Queen, a hundred and seventy pearls, chosen from the finest that were procured, and certain gold ornaments obtained in the new continent. Columbus besought the Sovereigns to notice that these were the first pearls obtained from the West. He proposed that the discoveries in the *terra firma* should be continued with three ships, by Don Bartholomew, as soon as the presence of the Adelantado would be no longer necessary on account of the troubles caused by Roldan.

The Admiral, in a particular report, exposed in their sad reality the events that had supervened during his absence. He added that things would be made right again, if the Sovereigns would arrest the spread of the enmity conceived against his expeditions, and if the gentlemen of the bureau of marine would abstain from traducing the Indies, from hindering the expediting of affairs, and from delays in the way of supplies, as they had done at the departure of his squadron, — delays which were very prejudicial to the colony during his absence. It was, moreover, from Seville that the leaven was carried which was the cause of all the trouble.

The Admiral, after having sincerely shown the evil, pointed out how it may be remedied :

It would be necessary to prolong a year or two longer the power given the colonists to employ in their service the natives who had been made prisoners-of-war. With the exception of clothing, equipments and wine, which it would be necessary to import from Spain, everything else necessary for life could be procured from the soil. He was preparing to raise large crops of cassava, a kind of food to which the Castilians had already become accustomed. Sweet potatoes, and *ajjes*, were abundant in every locality. The rivers were numerous, and abounded with fish, and poultry and hogs multiplied there soon. Utias were so numerous there that a dog, led by a domestic, could catch

from fifteen to twenty of them in a day. The means of subsistence were abundant; and there was nothing wanting but Christians, who would be such in practice as well as in name.

He proposed to send, at each departure of the ships for Castile, fifty of these vicious and ungovernable souls, who would be replaced by an equal number of orderly men. At the same time, some pious, zealous missionaries should be sent from Spain, to labor in the conversion of the Indians, and particularly to reform the vicious inclinations of Christians who were unworthy of this name. In order to facilitate the spiritual mission of these religious, he requested that an able judge should be sent, who would be well versed in law, and was already accustomed to administering justice; without whom, he said, the religious would obtain but little fruit in their labors. He insisted on having a Spaniard for judge, because the malcontents complained of his own rigor, saying that, as a Genoese, he spared but little the blood of Castilians.

This frank and open manner of exposing the evil, and indicating the remedies, was not appreciated by the Court.

SECTION III.

At length, on the seventeenth of November, an article of capitulation was drawn up between the chiefs of the rebels and Carvajal, assisted by the major-domo Diego de Salamanca, which was subject to the ratification of the Admiral.

It was stipulated, 1st, that Roldan and his partisans should embark for Spain from the port of Xaragua, in two ships that were to be provisioned and ready for sailing within the space of fifty days; 2d, that they should each receive a certificate of good conduct, and an order for the amount of their pay; 3d, that they should receive back certain property which had been sequestrated from them, and, among the rest, three hundred hogs taken from Roldan; 4th, that each of them should have, to serve him, some

Indians, whom they could take to Castile if these desired to follow them, and with the privilege of taking, by preference, the Indian women they had made mothers, or who were going to become such.

This convention was signed by the Admiral on the twenty-first of November. At the same time, he proclaimed a further act of grace, permitting such of the rebels as chose to remain in the island to enter into the royal service, or to hold land in any part of the island. This measure was a large element in the prosperity of the colony. At this time the rebels appeared impatient to depart, and they set out for Xaragua. The stipulation of furnishing them with ships postponed the intended expedition of the Adelantado, who was to follow up the discovery of Paria and secure the pearl trade. The Admiral was profoundly grieved at this state of things. There remained to him but three ships, and these he had intended for the continuation of his discoveries. The sea stores on hand scarcely sufficed for the passage of the rebels to Spain, therefore the voyage of exploration must not be thought of for the present.

The Admiral found, in the absence of these firebrands, some compensation for his regrets. He could, at last, occupy himself with the interests of the colony, establish order, collect tribute, extend the culture of lands, raise farm stock, organize the working of the mines, and ameliorate the condition of the Spaniards in the island. Without reposing for an hour, he charged his youngest brother, the modest and pious Don Diego, with the government of San Domingo, and went with Don Bartholomew to visit the interior of the island.

When the ships were on the point of weighing anchor, the Admiral wrote to the Sovereigns, invoking their justice, stating the circumstances under which the certificates were wrung from him, — to save the island from utter confusion and ruin, — and that he had signed these agreements with the insurgents because he was unable to subdue them. He

besought their Highnesses not to recognize engagements made against his will, under the pressure of revolt, and really null and void from the want of liberty on the one part, and of loyal execution on the other. For these reasons, he advised that Roldan and his band should be seized, and that their gold (of which they were said to have large quantities) should be taken from them until their conduct would be investigated, and that the women they had taken with them through constraint, and among whom were many daughters of caciques, should be taken back from them. This letter was confided to the care of an officer whose devotedness was unquestionable.

CHAPTER V.

The Chiefs of the Rebels cannot control them. — Arrival of Ojeda, who comes to patronize the Rebels. — Simultaneous Revolt of the Natives. — Columbus, abandoned, and on the point of flying to sea from his Enemies, is providentially aided. — Voluntary Submission of the Chiefs of the Rebels. — Order is reëstablished and Prosperity commences.

SECTION I.

WHILE Columbus thought that the rebels had sailed for Spain, the latter considered it proper to remain. Xaragua had too many attractions for them to leave it. Under the pretext that the ships had not arrived within the specified time, that they were badly equipped, and still worse provisioned, they refused to depart. However, Rol-dan, in a conversation with Carvajal, having expressed a desire to see the Admiral, to come to terms with him, Columbus sent him a safe-conduct, the inviolability of which was guaranteed by three highly-esteemed hidalgos and two sea-captains. Among the signers we cannot omit mentioning the name of a gallant man and good Christian, Cristobal Rodriguez, surnamed *La Lengua*, because he was the first Castilian who learned to speak the principal language of Hayti. The Admiral had strongly encouraged him in this study. With a constancy equal to his disinterestedness, Rodrigo la Lengua rendered great service in the government of the island, often exposed to the danger of losing his life among the Indians, and became, as an interpreter, the zealous auxiliary of the Franciscan religious.

Soon after, Columbus, following the example of the Good Pastor, who seeks his sheep that have gone astray,

came himself with two caravels to the port of Azua, to obtain a meeting with Roldan. Far from being touched with a kindness that was not due to him, Roldan went on board the caravel of the Admiral, and haughtily proposed his conditions, as if he had been a conqueror. He engaged to lay down his arms on these conditions: 1st, he should be reëstablished in his office as chief justice; 2d, a proclamation should be issued declaring that the troubles that had arisen were the consequence of malevolence and false reports; 3d, the expulsion from the island, and the immediate transportation to Europe, of fifteen persons whom he would designate; 4th, that those who remained should have lands granted them in place of royal pay.

Extravagant and insolent as these conditions were, Columbus granted them, through love of peace. But, on his going on shore, the companions of Roldan added another to them still more extravagant, namely, that if the Admiral should fail in the fulfilment of any of these articles, they should have a right to assemble and obtain their execution by such means as they would judge proper. This was the height of insolence and insult. Still, Columbus, ceding to inexorable necessity, signed it, adding that he would consent to it as long as they themselves would obey the orders of the Sovereigns, his own, and those of the functionaries appointed by him. This express stipulation, which appeared to him his last resource, and the sheet-anchor of his authority, he inserted in the commission as chief judge given to Roldan; but, on sight of it, the latter insolently commanded that these words should be effaced, and, appealing to the brutality of his accomplices, threatened to hang immediately whoever dared to contradict him. The Admiral had still to submit to the will of his former ungrateful and rebellious servitor.

This moderation of Columbus scarcely made any impression on the arrogance of the triumphant traitors. Roldan presented himself as the only real authority, even under the very eyes of the Admiral himself. In San Domingo,

always surrounded by malcontents and the declared enemies of the Columbuses, he offended, molested, and threatened whoever dared not to join his party.

Our heart sickens at the recital of such outrages.

To add to his crosses, in place of the efficacious support he expected from the Sovereigns, he received an answer dictated by Fonseca, and the ambiguous terms of which indicated dispositions of an equivocal character. He was informed that the Sovereigns had received his letters. That as to the rebellion of Roldan, this affair being of great importance, their Highnesses would examine it attentively, and provide a remedy for it. Evidently his report, so precise, so complete, had not convinced the Sovereigns. He sacrificed his days, and those of his brothers, to the interests of the Crown of Castile, without his being able to inspire the monarchs with that noble confidence of which he was so worthy, and which would have been the chief recompense for a heart like his.

This disheartening conviction, which would have paralyzed any will but his, did not prevent him from pursuing his plan of reorganization of the colony. He sought, at first, to gain by mildness and material interests the old abettors of Roldan, by giving them lands; but the grants were at such distances from each other that the rebels were scattered over a large space, far apart from each other, and at sufficient distances from the older settlements. He formed a company of chosen men, whose devotedness was equal to their moderation and bravery, whose business it was at the same time to receive tribute from the natives, maintain peace among the Spaniards, and repress, at the start, any risings among the latter. He prepared to rid the colony of incorrigible malcontents who at no price would work, and, among others, the fifteen individuals whose insufferable turbulence had been denounced by even Roldan himself.

He appointed the two honorable alcalds, Garcia de Barrantes and Miguel Ballester, to go to Castile, to support at Court his demands for the interior government of the col-

ony. In order that they may be enabled to enlighten the Sovereigns in regard to the revolt of Roldan, and on the measures that should be taken, he furnished them with the depositions and proceedings taken against the rebels.

A large number of the malcontents embarked in the caravels, taking with them some Indian women, several of whom were mothers, or about to become such. Each of them clandestinely introduced into the caravels several Indian slaves, contrary to the express orders of the Admiral.

SECTION II.

Before the departure of the caravels, alarming reports had come from the north-western extremity of the island: a general revolt was preparing. The Ciguayans, more warlike and more impatient of the foreign yoke than the other islanders, had risen in arms. The Admiral despatched against them the Adelantado in haste, with all the force at his disposal.

While his brother was separated from him by revolted tribes, and San Domingo was without defence, information of a still graver character than the insurrection came from the opposite part of the island: four caravels had appeared in the port of Yaquimo. Alonzo de Ojeda, formerly under great obligations to the Admiral, but now a creature of Fonseca's, commanded them. In violation of the privileges accorded by the Sovereigns to the Admiral, he went to the coast of Paria and the Gulf of Pearls, and he brought back with him gold and slaves. His temerity, emboldened by the protection of Fonseca, inspired him with the idea of hurrying the downfall of Columbus by seizing on his power and his person. He offered the Spaniards settled in the neighborhood of Yaquimo to rid them of the tyranny of the Columbuses. He pretended that these foreigners, fallen in disfavor with the King, were no longer countenanced at Court but by the Queen, whose declining health, since the

death of her son, left no hope for her recovery ; and that henceforth Don Juan de Fonseca, his patron, was the only true authority for the Indies. He said he was authorized to take upon himself, in concert with Carvajal, the provisory government of the island, and declared he would immediately insist on payment of their back pay for such as would march with him to San Domingo.

The old companions of Roldan, incapable of not availing themselves of an occasion for revolt, applauded this proceeding. Ojeda, having reunited these audacious enemies of tranquillity, would constrain the peaceable or less ardent colonists to swell his party, and to effect this purpose he would surround their habitations during the night.

When the Admiral received this afflicting news he was without disposable troops, and the doubtful character of the feeble garrison of San Domingo added to his inquietude. There remained to him no means of meeting so many perils. At this juncture his only resource was perhaps his chief danger, and certainly it was the greatest of his humiliations ; this only resource was to put himself under the protection of the traitor Roldan. But would not the interview of the chief justice and Ojeda, men equally violent and ambitious, lead them to unite so as to overthrow legitimate power, and substitute their own for it ? Defection was rife among the subordinates of the Admiral ; one after another abandoned him in this accumulation of dangers.

In this ingress of enemies from without, come to arouse the slumbering revolt within, together with the rising of the natives, the Admiral recognized the secret machinations of the Bureau of Seville. Remembering the ingratitude of the Court, the continued malevolence of King Ferdinand, which his frigid politeness could never wholly conceal ; seeing his authority without support in Spain, without respect, or effective force in the island ; seeing his life and that of his brothers was continually menaced by bandits accustomed to every species of crime ; feeling his state of isolation, and

the powerlessness that was its consequence; and considering the misfortunes of the poor Indians, whom the excesses of impious Christians prevented from embracing the Gospel, — he felt a great loathing for men. Bowed to the dust, and sinking under the weight of so many afflictions, this great soul, who had overcome so many fears and surmounted so many dangers, was overwhelmed with a mortal sadness.

This day was the anniversary of the birth of the Saviour, — Christmas Day of the year 1499.

The courage of Columbus, until then unconquered, suddenly failed him. He shuddered with horror at the assassination to which he was doomed. The instinct of self-preservation alone remained to him, and, for the first time, he thought of saving his life. He resolved to cast himself, with his brothers, into a caravel, — to fly across the ocean from the rage of his enemies. But in the midst of his darkest apprehensions from his officers, and the mortal anguish of his heart, he did not invoke the Divine Majesty in vain. That Providence who had so many times shown him His tutelary vigilance, came personally to his aid. God deigned to speak to his perplexed servant. A voice from Above said to him: “O man of little faith! why art thou cast down? Fear nothing. I am with thee, and I will provide for thee.” *

SECTION III.

Conformably to the mysterious announcement of divine aid, the aspect of things immediately changed, without effort made on his part. Before the day was ended, he learned the discovery of immense gold mines. Roldan, far from sharing his power with Ojeda, thought of only repulsing from the island this dangerous rival. The struggle

* “Mi soccorre all’ hora Nostro Signore, dicendomi: o huomo di poca fide non haver paura, io sono.” — Fernando Colombo, *Vita del Ammariglio*, cap. LXXXIV.

was ardent between these adversaries, — one worthy of the other by his audacity, cunning, and physical force. At length, after a series of curious and dramatic incidents, Roldan compelled Ojeda to take to his ships and put to sea.

The facility with which Ojeda recruited partisans among the old insurgents, caused Roldan to reflect seriously on the matter, and determined him to sustain unreservedly, in future, the authority of the Admiral, whence his own derived its power.

As soon as the old rebels saw that the chief justice was now executing the orders of the Admiral, and laboring for the reëstablishment of order, they conceived a mortal hatred for him.

During these occurrences, a young hidalgo, named Fernando de Guevarra, cousin to Adrien de Mojica, who had been one of the chiefs in the revolt of Roldan, came to Xaragua to embark on the ships of Ojeda, because the Admiral had banished him from the island on account of his depraved habits. But when he came, the caravels of the turbulent favorite of Fonseca had already sailed for some days. Roldan permitted him to remain in Xaragua until the Admiral would have pronounced on his fate. Guevarra, possessing an agreeable person and winning manners, obtained admittance to the court of Queen Ana-coana, and presumed even to aspire to the hand of her daughter, the young Higuenemota. Having gained the affection of this charming princess, he obtained the consent of her mother to their union, which he appeared to desire legitimating by the blessing of the Church. But whether Roldan was himself enamored of the young beauty, as has been stated by Las Casas, or rather that he did not consider as serious the promise of this shameless libertine, or that he should not, in the precarious position in which Guevarra was placed, suffer a marriage to take place which would give some political importance to a man stricken administratively by the Viceroy, the chief judge ordered Guevarra to quit immediately the quarter he had chosen for his residence.

Notwithstanding this order, the young *hidalgo* could not bring himself to leave the place where his lady-love resided. Informed of the disobedience of his order, Roldan caused Guevarra to be brought before him, admonished him strictly, and reproached him with having abused the confidence of a lady so eminent as Queen Anacoana, — a disloyalty which the Viceroy would not pardon. Guevarra implored him to be permitted to remain in Xaragua, but Roldan being inflexible, he pretended to submit. Still, the judge learned that, in the place of obeying, Guevarra was concealed in the palace of the queen, and that he sent for a priest to baptize his affianced bride. Roldan commanded him to quit immediately the territory of Xaragua, and to go and present himself in person to the Viceroy, to receive his orders.

Far from complying with this injunction, the *hidalgo* answered with threats, and, with some malcontents, hatched a plot against the life of the chief justice. It was agreed between them to seize on him and put out his eyes. Informed of their plan, he saw that a vigorous, sudden attack could alone prevent a revolt, and issued a warrant against Guevarra and seven of his accomplices. Their sudden arrest was effected in the very palace of Anacoana, and beneath her own eyes. The whole eight, loaded with irons, were marched to the citadel of San Domingo.

On learning the arrest of Guevarra, his cousin, Adrien de Mojica, one of the old accomplices of Roldan, became incensed against him. He immediately started for Bonao, the place of meeting of the old rebels, and the residence of Pedro de Requelme, the most intimate friend that Roldan had. It was not hard for Mojica to excite the inhabitants of Bonao, and to bring over to the party even Requelme, upon whom Roldan so much relied, and whom he had appointed deputy judge. Mojica found himself at the head of a large and audacious party. They determined not only to free Guevarra, and make away with Roldan, whom they

considered a traitor to their cause, but also to put the Admiral to death.

Roldan, informed of their project, followed them in haste, without their suspecting it. One night, while the principal conspirators were assembled at their place of meeting, Roldan, with seven domestics and two soldiers, suddenly pounced on them, and seized on Mojica, with some of his accomplices, whom they led in chains to San Domingo.

Immediately Roldan sent an official report of the arrest to the Admiral, and requested his orders. The Admiral was at that time occupied with the fortifications of Concepcion. The news was very afflicting and very embarrassing to him. He had promised himself that he would never "touch the hair of any one's head." And it was in shedding tears he replied to the chief justice, that since these incorrigible disturbers of the peace had, without provocation, made a new attempt at rebellion, he must visit them with justice conformably to the laws of the kingdom. Roldan immediately pronounced their condemnation. Adrien de Mojica was condemned to death, and his accomplices, according to the degrees of their culpability, to banishment or imprisonment. The execution of Mojica was to take place from the top of the fortress. At the sight of the preparations made for him, this blustering hidalgo, seized with fear, hoping, perhaps, that his former friends would come to rescue him, repulsed his confessor in order to gain time, or to extend the terrible moment. Roldan, indignant at his cowardice, ordered the wretch to be flung from the top of the fortress into the foss.* As to Guevarra, the chief justice kept him a prisoner until the fifteenth of

*Availing themselves of the mistake of Herrera, a certain school has completely denaturalized these facts, in attributing them to Columbus, who was then absent. We have here reported the facts as they really occurred, and not according to a version against which the very statements of Columbus himself, and of his son Fernando, protest in advance.

June, when he sent him to the Admiral, who was still at Fort Conception.

The conspirators were at the last extremity. The Adelantado, on the one hand, and the chief justice, pursued them with rapidity and vigor, and carried the sentence into execution on the spot where they caught them. For this purpose they took with them a priest, in order that the wretches may at least make good confessions, and receive absolution.

The promptness of the punishment, the inflexibility of the chief justice, and his deference for the least desires of the Viceroy, frightened the rebels; they took to flight. The peaceable portion of the community became reassured, and the Indians returned to the obedience of Castile. They recommenced paying their tributes. The peaceable colonists were enabled to prosecute their labors in the cultivation of their lands,—labors that were much encouraged by the Admiral. The plantations became multiplied, and flocks and herds increased. Tranquillity reigned in the whole island; and a single Spaniard could with security traverse the whole island, unarmed. Already a number of Indians had asked for baptism, and they commenced clothing themselves in European fashion. They were led to abandon their old custom of living in isolated habitations, and to come and live in villages, which permitted their being the more easily instructed in the Christian religion. A bright future seemed to await the colony. Columbus felt assured that, in three years' time, the royal tribute alone that would be received in the island would amount to sixty millions annually. In truth, in five years after, they amounted to more than a hundred millions.

But already, through the influence of the bureaus of Seville, an event was preparing which was to change the destiny of the Indians, frustrate the sweetest hopes of Columbus, turn the children of the forest from the sweet yoke of the Gospel, and deliver their race to ruin and despair.

CHAPTER VI.

The Enemies of Columbus in Seville. — Secret Hostility of Ferdinand. — A Commissary is appointed. — Bobadilla is invested with extraordinary Powers. — Indians sold as Slaves. — Isabella annuls the Sales, and orders the Indians to be restored to Liberty.

SECTION I.

THE atrocious insult given to Columbus by the ex-Jew Ximeno Breviesca, was recompensed with giving him the office of paymaster-general of the marine. Fonseca rewarded, as a service rendered the Crown, every mark of animosity shown against Columbus. The daringness of his attacks show how much he counted on support from the highest quarter. The ill-will of Ferdinand towards Columbus was no longer a secret. The monarch envied the celebrity of the great man, and was jealous of the high opinion and affectionate regard entertained for him by the Queen. The unwavering confidence she had in him irritated the selfish susceptibility of the King. Since the year 1496, he regretted the title of "Viceroy" given to a foreigner, which seemed to him to diminish the majesty of his crown. In his letters he always called him "Admiral of the Indies." The titles of "Viceroy" and of "Perpetual Governor" were intentionally omitted.

The new discovery of the *terra firma*, and the profound observations of Columbus in these regions, with the packages of pearls and of golden ornaments forwarded by him, gave great satisfaction to the Queen. Still, she did not write to him herself, but charged Fonseca to do so. As regarded Ferdinand, he did not find that the results of these expeditions had hitherto covered the payments made by the

treasury in advance, and saw in the person of Columbus only an occasion of unprofitable expenses. Accordingly he lent a willing ear to the accusations that were made against him.

SECTION II.

The Sovereigns resolved to send a commissary to Hispaniola, to regulate matters there. Columbus had more than once requested that a jurisconsult, learned in the law, should be sent; but unfortunately the person chosen was not a jurisconsult, but a military man, the commander Francisco de Bobadilla, — a man who enjoyed the esteem of Fonseca, and who had great credit at Court. Yet the departure of Bobadilla was delayed more than a year, when the Queen made a visit to Seville. From this time it was that, through the influence of the bureaus, Columbus fell into disfavor with her. No longer are his demands granted. He is refused his eldest son, Don Diego, whom he wrote for, and whom he wished to train in the management of affairs, and prepare for the government which he was one day to exercise.

Previously to this period, the Queen had ordered all the Indians who had been brought to Spain as slaves to be set free, and sent back to their own country.

CHAPTER VII.

Arrival of Bobadilla at San Domingo. — He besieges the Fortress, and sets the Prisoners at Liberty. — He seizes on the Papers and Effects of the Admiral, who was then absent. — He imprisons Columbus and his two Brothers. — He sends them, in Chains, to Spain.

SECTION I.

WHILE Columbus was assiduously engaged in enlarging the Fortress of Conception, on the morning of the twenty-third of August two caravels were perceived from San Domingo, struggling against the land breezes, and making for the mouth of the Ozema.

Don Diego Columbus, thinking that these caravels brought Don Diego, the eldest son of the Admiral, immediately despatched a boat, to know if he was on board. The boat having accosted one of the caravels, the *Gorda*, inquired who the commandant was. Bobadilla answered that he himself was the man; that he called himself Commander Francisco de Bobadilla; that he came as a commissary of the Sovereigns, to judge the rebels; and that the young Diego had not embarked. The boat returned.

This news, which was soon circulated about, spread dismay among the old insurgents.

Towards ten o'clock, the wind having fallen, the caravels made their entrance into the port. Bobadilla, at first sight, could see at some distance two gibbets, from which two bodies were suspended. Nothing more was, in his mind, necessary to justify the charges of cruelty brought against the Admiral. The greater part of the functionaries of the

government soon came on board the caravel, to present their homage to the envoy of the Sovereigns.

The next day, accompanied by his suite, he went to the church, where Diego Columbus, and Rodrigo Perez, the then deputy judge, also attended. After mass, at the very door of the church, Bobadilla ordered his letter-patent to be read, authorizing him to investigate the late troubles that had arisen in the island. Then he demanded of Don Diego, and of the deputy judge, to surrender to him Fernando Guevarra, Pedro Requelme, and the other prisoners detained in the fortress.

Diego Columbus replied that the Viceroy had titles superior to this commission, as would be seen at the proper time and place, and that in his absence he could not comply with such a requisition; and he requested a copy of the letter-patent, to forward to the Admiral, on whom everything in the island depended. Bobadilla answered that, as he had not power to act, it was useless to give him the copy he demanded; but he would soon show he had authority, not only as chief justice, but as governor, and that he had command over them all, — even over the Admiral himself.

The next day, after mass, Bobadilla ordered the notary to read, from the church door, a royal ordinance conferring on him the government and judicature of the islands and *terra firma* of the Indies, and, afterwards, a royal mandate ordering Columbus and his brothers to deliver him up the fortresses, arms, munitions, and other royal property.

He then went and attacked the fortress (which made no resistance), and took possession of the prisoners detained there.

He next went and took possession of the residence of the Viceroy, who, he said, would need it no longer, as he was going to send him and his brothers, in chains, to Spain. He seized on all his furniture, gold, plate, jewels, pearls, horses and arms; and all that without witnesses, or taking any inventory of them. The mineralogical curiosities, the rare shells, and the vegetable collections the Admiral had

gathered or formed in his voyages, and the religious memorials given him, became the prey of this brutal and greedy ignoramus. The notes and observations of Columbus, his charts and drawings, and documents containing the effusions of his piety and the inmost secrets of his sublime heart, were scrutinized and profaned by the looks of this sycophant. In addition to these, he suppressed from the administrative documents every writing that would have confounded the accusers of the Admiral.

SECTION II.

Don Diego despatched a messenger to the Admiral, who was then at Conception, informing him of the arrival and proceedings of Bobadilla. Columbus at first thought that this envoy, like Aguado, infatuated with his powers, exaggerated them. Not finding in his conscience anything that could have caused such rigor on the part of the Sovereigns, he was inclined to think that Bobadilla had fabricated his titles, to impose on the credulous, and, like Ojeda, recommence troubles. Still, in order to be nearer, and become more fully informed of the affairs of San Domingo, he came to Bonaó,—a place that was daily increasing in importance. From this place he wrote to Bobadilla, felicitating him on his arrival in the island, and requesting him not to take any important measures before he would have studied the localities. He gave him to understand that, desiring to go to Castile, he would resign him the reins of government, and would furnish him with all the information he may need. But the commander returned no answer to this letter. He held to the silence of hatred, or of disdain, for a fallen rival.

Some time after, an alcaid, sent by the new governor, came to Bonaó, to publish an official copy of his powers, and to command the inhabitants to obey him. Having heard this notification, the Admiral protested, before the alcaid, that his titles of “Viceroy” and “Governor” could

not be annulled by the powers given to Bobadilla, and that the nomination of the commissary regarded only the administration of justice; and therefore he required all those present to be obedient to him in everything else, as formerly.

Still, although Bobadilla had, like a pirate, seized on the residence of the Viceroy, he was not quite easy. The Admiral had some devoted officers with him. He exercised a great influence on the caciques. His brother, the Adelantado, was in Xaragua, at the head of a faithful troop. A rumor was circulated in San Domingo that the Admiral was going to commence a general movement in the island. As, in virtue of his treaties with Castile, Columbus was Perpetual Viceroy and Governor of the Indies, no order could annul his privileges. In justice he could resort to arms to maintain his rights. The new governor, then, fearing that the Admiral would rebel with the sword the mandate that was signed by the ingratitude of Ferdinand and the error of Isabella, judged it prudent to employ persuasive and gentle means to bring him to submit.

The piety of Columbus, and his affection for the Order of St. Francis, were well known, and the commander thought that the best intermediary in this affair would be a Franciscan. Accordingly, on the seventh of September, he besought Father Juan de Trasiera to go to Bonao and inform the Admiral of his having fallen into disfavor with the Sovereigns, and to show him the letter of credence given to the new Governor. The Franciscan father could not refuse the sad commission. He informed the Viceroy of all that had passed in San Domingo. To convince him of the reality of the facts, which appeared to Columbus like an uneasy dream, he showed him the letter of credence, whose terrible laconism removed every uncertainty, and dispensed with further explanation. The following is a copy of this strange letter: —

“DON CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, our Admiral of the

Ocean, we have ordered Commander Francisco de Bobadilla, the bearer of this present, to tell you, on our part, certain things with which he is charged. We pray you to attach credence and credit to them, and to act accordingly."

The letter was signed by the King and the Queen, and countersigned by the Secretary, Miguel Perez d'Almanza; so there was no more room for doubt. The Sovereigns broke the conventions made with him, violated their word, and disposed of privileges and offices which belonged to him and his descendants. They condemned him without a trial, or giving him an opportunity of justifying himself. At first, on thinking of this atrocious iniquity, which would have subverted the reason of any other mortal, Columbus was overwhelmed with sorrow, and blushed with shame for the Sovereigns. But if they stifled the sense of gratitude, forgot their promises, and falsified their words, the Admiral respected his oaths. He resolved not to fail in his obedience, and to give, in a Christian manner, the example of submission to even unjust authority.

Columbus, in order not to give offence to the pride of the new Governor, took the route to San Domingo on horseback, without an escort, and almost without servants, having for a sword-belt only his cord of St. Francis, and, for arms, his breviary. It was between prayer, the poetry of the Psalms, and the contemplation of nature in these equinoctial regions, that the disciple of the Cross, fully resigned to the divine will, came humbly to his enemy. As soon as Bobadilla was informed of his approach, he had Don Diego, the Admiral's brother, seized and put in irons on board a caravel.

Soon after, the Viceroy having come to salute the new Governor, the latter, refusing to see him, ordered him to be immediately arrested and incarcerated in the fortress, with iron fetters on his feet. Columbus, having offered no opposition to the satellites, followed them to the prison.

The Admiral knew, no more than his brother Diego, the

cause of this treatment. It was kept a strict secret. Nobody was allowed to see or speak to him. But Bobadilla sent him word to write to his brother the Adelantado, to beware of executing the persons condemned to death, whom he held in the prison at Xaragua, and to direct him to return to San Domingo without his soldiers. Columbus readily exhorted Don Bartholomew to submit with docility to orders given in the name of the Sovereigns, and besought him not to trouble himself about his imprisonment, assuring him that they would return to Castile, where the evil would be repaired that had been done them. As always, fully deferring to the wishes of his brother, the Adelantado immediately resigned his command, and took the route to San Domingo. Scarcely had he arrived there than he was arrested and put in irons on board another caravel; so that the three brothers were kept isolated from each other, without communication with each other, and in a state of the greatest destitution.

Columbus had on only the light coat he wore at the time of his arrest, and which he used to wear in the heat of the day. Bobadilla had seized on all his other clothing, even his *sayo*, or surtout. On the stone floor of his dungeon, with the pains of his rheumatism and the twinges of his gout, he had to suffer cruelly from cold during the nights, for he was almost naked — “*desnudo en cuerpo*.” His fare was composed of the most wretched stuff.

Bobadilla finished where he ought to have commenced, on arriving at Hispaniola, — he opened an inquiry concerning the late troubles that had arisen in the island. But, in place of seizing on the persons who had been in revolt against the Admiral and his brothers, as he had been ordered by the Sovereigns, he gathered all the rebels, ringleaders, criminals, and the prisoners he had released, to come and depose against the Admiral, the Adelantado, and even the mild Don Diego. The consequence may be readily foreseen.

When it appeared that the inquiry had collected against

the three prisoners proofs of every crime, save the least offence against chastity, Bobadilla resolved to send them to the director of the marine, or to his friend Gonzalo Gomez Cervantes, at Cadiz. To insure the strict execution of his orders, he chose a young officer, Alonso de Vallejo, a nephew to Gonzalo Gomez Cervantes, and a protégé of Fonseca's, in whose house he had grown up to manhood.

Columbus was not without some uneasy apprehensions. The disdain for every form of justice, the strict secrecy observed, and the inhuman treatment he had received, were of ill omen. He did not know where the measures adopted against him would end; and, when the silence of his obscure prison was suddenly troubled by the clang of arms and the tramp of soldiers, he felt certain he was going to be assassinated or led to a scaffold. Seeing at the head of the guard a favorite of Fonseca's, young Vallejo, whom he had formerly seen in Seville, he thought his last hour had come. "Vallejo," said he, mournfully, "whither are you taking me?" "On board the *Gorda*, your Excellency, to embark," replied the other. "Vallejo! do you tell me the truth?" "By the life of your Excellency," replied the officer, "I swear I am going to lead you to the caravel to embark." The frank manner and accent of the officer reassured the Admiral. He felt as if relieved from a stupendous weight. He feared he was going to be executed without judgment, as he had been imprisoned without trial, and that he would leave his children behind him enshrouded in an opprobrium with which his enemies would have sullied his memory.

Columbus was placed on board the *Gorda*, the same vessel in which his two brothers were. The three were in irons.

The voluminous inquest taken in their case having been confided to the care of Alonso de Vallejo, commandant, and to Andres Martin, master of the vessel, at the commencement of October they weighed anchor.

Vallejo, though a dependent of Fonseca's, was a man

of honor. He was grieved to see in irons the master of all navigators, and the conqueror of the *Gloomy Ocean*, whose mild and calm dignity in the midst of so many insults, alone belied the odious charges brought against him within a few weeks. The master of the *Gorda*, Andres Martin, shared in silence the sympathies of the young officer. So, as soon as they were out of sight of the port, they respectfully came to the Admiral and besought him to be permitted to take off his chains. Columbus refused this alleviation of his evils. He did not wish, even at that distance, in the liberty of the ocean, to appear to contravene the orders given by the mandatory of the Sovereigns. Notwithstanding the annoyances and pains which the chains gave his aching limbs, he kept them on, recognizing only in the Sovereigns, in whose name they were put on, the power of delivering him from them.

The disciple of the Gospel uttered no complaint. He remained silent, wishing to give an example of Christian submission to legitimate authority, even when it is deceived or abused. But if Columbus addressed no communication to the Sovereigns regarding the iniquity of which he was the victim, at least his heart was solaced in writing to the virtuous friend of the Queen, Doña Juana de la Torre, who had nursed with her breast-milk the son of Isabella, — the Infant Don Juan.

SECTION III.

This letter, which we would like to reproduce religiously in its whole length, bears in full relief the expression of the providential character and the superhuman mission of Columbus. We perceive, in the superior animation of its style, the spirit of an inspired Christian, and the simple, natural language of a seaman.

The disfavor into which he fell does not move Columbus in the ordinary way. He does not consider his adversity as a purely individual fact, — the consequence of the hostility

of individuals or of a coterie. He recognizes, in what he experiences, the warfare of the world against the spirit of faith. "If it be something new for me," says he, "to complain of the world, still its habit of maltreating is very old. It has battled with me a thousand times, and I have resisted it until the present, when neither arms nor counsels can avail me. It has barbarously sunk me to the bottom." * Yet, "sunk to the bottom" as he appears to the eyes of the world, the disciple of the Word is not cast down. He adds: "Hope in Him who has created us sustains me; His aid has always been very prompt. A short time ago, being still more thrown down, He raised me with His divine arm, saying to me, 'O man of little faith! why art thou cast down? Fear nothing: I am with thee, and I will provide for thee.'" He reminds the excellent Doña Juana that he was, as it were, forced to come from abroad "to serve these princes with an innate affection, and to render them unheard-of services." "God," says he, "has made me the harbinger of the new heaven and the new earth, of which, in the Apocalypse, He speaks by the mouth of St. John, after having spoken of it by that of Isaias, and He has shown me the place where they are to be found. All showed themselves incredulous. But God gave the Queen, my mistress, the spirit of understanding, accorded her the necessary courage, and rendered her heiress of all (this New World), as being his dear and well-beloved daughter."

The change of opinion, and the violent measures adopted in regard to him, do not disconcert him. He knows that the affairs he has conducted "pertain to those who cannot but gain, from day to day, in the esteem of men." Still, matters have come to that pass, that the vilest wretches think they have the right to outrage him. "But," says he, "thanks be to God, this iniquity will some day come to the knowledge of him who has the authority to repress it."

* "Con crueldad me tiene echado al fondo." — *Carta del Almirante al ama del príncipe D. Juan.*

This authority, whose protection the herald of the Cross invokes, — what is it, unless it be the Papacy itself? Who can oppose the violation of his rights, and the injustice rendered him, if it be not the successor of the Prince of the Apostles, and the grantor of the donation made to the Catholic Sovereigns? To him alone belonged to evoke this cause, to protect with his fulminations the Messenger of the Church, and prevent him from succumbing under the shafts of iniquity and the artifices of regal felony. The intimate bonds which attached the mission of Columbus to the apostolic interests of the Holy See, naturally made him hope in its aid. Yet, he does not insist on this eventuality. He devises no project; he forms no plan; he exculpates himself from nothing, because he does not know what he is accused of. He tries not, in advance, to repel charges which he cannot foresee precisely, having done nothing that could be reprehended.

Not a word escapes him, making any harsh allusion to the Queen. One would say he knows how she was led into error.

What a Christian!

He has been stripped of everything, outraged, and put in irons; he bears them this moment; his flesh is bruised; and still this violent reverse of fortune, the audacious spoliation of which he is the victim, the secret enmity of the King, and the triumph of his persecutors, have not been able to shake his constancy. Finishing his letter he says: "God, Our Lord, remains with His power and His knowledge as heretofore, and he especially punishes ingratitude."

CHAPTER VIII.

The Queen grieved at the Indignity offered to Columbus.—His arrival at Court. — Ovando appointed to supersede Bobadilla. — Columbus occupies himself with the Deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre. — He composes religious Poems, and a Compilation from the Scriptures, entitled “Book of the Prophecies.”

SECTION I.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE seemed to give propitious winds in order to shorten the sufferings of the Admiral. His voyage was very happy and rapid. The two caravels, leaving in October, entered the Bay of Cadiz on the twentieth of November. Never did any vessel come in so short a time. Like their captain, all the officers lavished the most respectful attentions on the Admiral and his brothers. By care of the master of the *Gorda*, as soon as they cast anchor a confidential man was secretly despatched to Granada, where the Sovereigns then resided, with the letter to the nurse of the Infant Don Juan. The swiftness of this messenger outstripped the arrival of the despatches and the proceedings sent by Bobadilla. Happily for Columbus, Granada was not Seville; bureaucratic hostilities and local rancor had not perverted public opinion there. Around the Alhambra the memory of the Discovery, — that grand conquest of Catholic faith, — and the glory of the standard-bearer of the Church, were religiously preserved. Whoever his detractors may have been, the lustre of his services, and the grandeur of his work, admired even by Mahometans, caused a general burst of indignation at this outrage, which scarcely seemed credible. We may judge what passed in the heart of Isabella.

As soon as Doña Juana de la Torre communicated to the Queen the letter of Columbus, the indignation of Isabella was only surpassed by her grief. A courier was immediately despatched to Gonzola Gomez de Cervantes to set the Admiral and his brothers instantly at liberty. The two Sovereigns hastened to write Columbus a letter, in which they deplore the offences given him, so much opposed to their sentiments, which they felt wounded in his person. With reiterated expressions of regard and esteem, they invited him to come immediately to Court, and ordered, at the same time, that two thousand ducats should be advanced him, in order to remedy the destitution in which Bobadilla had dared to place him.

The seventeenth of December, Columbus, with his brothers, was conducted to the solemn audience of the Sovereigns, who welcomed him with marks of the greatest kindness, and of bitter resentment towards his persecutor. A few days afterwards the Queen called him to a private audience, in order to have an explanation of the causes of the animosity with which he was pursued, and of the true state of the Indies. In this interview Columbus presented himself alone.

At the sight of the Revealer of the Creation, Isabella, calling to mind the indignities he had suffered in her name, was moved to tears. When the venerable man beheld this mark of tenderness, he could no longer restrain the feelings suppressed within his breast; they burst forth in tears and sobbings. Columbus and Isabella wept at the same time, without proffering a word to each other. It was after this colloquy of their souls that Columbus, in a few words, upset all the charges of his accusers.

The tears of Isabella were a sovereign balm for the bleeding heart of Columbus. The Catholic Queen assured him that all his grievances should be redressed, and that he should be reinstated in all his dignities and privileges; still, on account of the enmities existing against him, perhaps it would be better not to expose him immediately to

new embarrassments, in reinstating him in the government of Hispaniola. After this audience, Columbus addressed the Sovereigns a formal complaint against the tyrannical acts committed by Bobadilla, and in which he shows the vices and malversations of the new administration. And almost at the same time, in order to interest in his reclamation some personages who formed part of the Council of the Sovereigns, he wrote a note, the rough draft of which, written with his own hand, has been happily preserved.

In this we find no artifice of language, no oratorical arrangement, no diplomatic shrewdness. It is the Messenger of the Cross who speaks. He recalls to mind that he came voluntarily to offer Spain the conquest of the Indies, and that he gave her the preference at a time when France, England, and Portugal had separately decided to risk an expedition. "Then our Saviour," says he, "ordained the route for me. I have placed under the power of their Highnesses lands larger than Africa and Europe. There is reason to hope that the Holy Church will prosper wonderfully by it. In seven years I have, by the Divine will, accomplished this conquest. At the moment that I hoped to obtain recompenses and repose, I was suddenly seized and put in irons, to the detriment of my honor, and the service of their Highnesses," etc. The Admiral beseeches the members of the Council, as faithful Christians, to examine all his conventions with the Crown, to consider how he came from afar to serve these princes, how he has quitted wife* and children, condemning himself to almost never seeing them, in order the better to watch over the service; and to notice that, in return for this devotedness, he has been, in the decline of his life, despoiled of his dignities and his rights, without any regard for justice or mercy.

As to the memorandum in which he justified his administration, it cannot be doubted that it contained conclusive

* "Y deje muger y hijos que jamas vi por ello." — *Col. Diplom.*, num. cxxxvii.

facts and important considerations; for, as a consequence of this communication, in spite of the influence of the Seville bureaus, the principal innovations of Bobadilla were annulled, and the regulations of Columbus again put in force.

Though acknowledging the administrative sagacity of Columbus, the monarchs did not judge it prudent to send him back to Hispaniola until such time as the animosity raised against him would have subsided. It was decided, in removing Bobadilla, to nominate in his place a temporary governor for two years; this time appeared sufficient to dispel factions, efface the traces of enmities, and re-establish the regularity of the government. It was, they said, especially in the interest of the Admiral that this measure was adopted.

Assuredly, when she promised to reinstate him in his titles and functions, the Queen was sincere; but the astute Ferdinand had secretly resolved to take away forever from Columbus the viceroyalty, as well as the real government of the Indies. Everything from that moment was directed to this point.

SECTION II.

Seeing the animosity manifested by the colonists towards Columbus, and the secret determination of Ferdinand not to reinstate him in his government, most historians have thought that Columbus, notwithstanding his genius, was not qualified for the position of governor.

In the system of those writers who deny all providential action in human affairs, and who maintain that the sole progress of Portuguese navigation would necessarily have led to the discovery of a continent situated to the west of Europe, Columbus could not avoid committing faults as governor, because he could not possess all the qualifications for such a position. But our readers, who will remember the superior gifts accorded to the herald of the Cross, his eminent qualities, surpassed only by his virtues; those who

know that, with the true Christian, mercy surpasses justice, will not doubt that so many excellent faculties, so many diverse aptitudes, and such a keen penetration, united to close observation, experience, and long-tried patience, qualified him to administer becomingly the government of the country he had discovered.

Here M. de Lorgues enters into a lengthy and able exposition and vindication of the government of Columbus. We cannot follow him but on a few points.

The only well-founded accusation brought by his enemies against the Viceroy was, his formal opposition to the baptism of some Indians.

It may appear strange that the messenger of salvation, who planted the Cross everywhere, and invited the natives to venerate it, should repel them from the Church, when they desired to enter her fold. But still, that he did so there is nothing more certain.

A number of Indians, enticed by the charm of novelty, their childish inclination for imitation, and, especially, the privileges accorded to converts, without having the least notions of real Christianity, demanded baptism as they would have demanded a European vest or cap. The Admiral opposed, with all his might, the condescendence of certain ecclesiastics, whose too indulgent proselytism favored this pretended religious movement, and who, with the desire of increasing promptly their flocks, admitted the Indians to baptism simply on their demand. It was through piety that he opposed the conferring of this sacrament; that is to say, its profanation. His manner of treating the Indians was always paternal. He recognized in the children of the forests his brethren in Jesus Christ. He loved them because he had discovered them in order to bring them under the sweet yoke of the Gospel.

It has been objected to Columbus, as a proof of his incapacity for governing, that he proposed the colonization of Hispaniola with criminals.

Honestly speaking, the idea of recruiting the colonists

from the prisons and bagnios ought not to be attributed to Columbus, but to dire necessity itself. Such a measure shows the sad extremity to which he was reduced. Let us not forget that, at the time of this proposition, the prejudice against the Indies was so great that no recompense could induce a Castilian to go there. A sojourn of two years there compensated for capital punishment. Moreover, it was a question of life or death for the colony. Again: the exclusion procured by Columbus of the most criminal malefactors, gave reason to hope that this penitentiary system would be attended with happy results. And, if these culprits had not arrived under unfavorable circumstances, in the midst of rebels whose example and suggestions had not awakened their evil instincts, there is reason to believe that their deportation would not have been a matter of regret.

Never was there a more difficult government than that with which Columbus was charged. He operated on the unknown, deprived of all administrative precedents, continually restrained by the difficulties of climate, of hygiene, of old customs and new needs, the perpetual conflicts between the hidalgos and the natives, continual insubordination, and the pedantic pretensions of the bureaucracy of Seville.

Yet we do not find, after having rigorously examined the matter, that Columbus committed even the shadow of a fault in his whole administration. Assuredly he was not infallible; still, he did not err. The protection of God extended to his works; and, if he was tried in his person, he was recompensed for his labors. None of his institutions contained the germ of vice, the occasion of disorder, or the principle of embarrassment for a future period.

We can find no defect in his administration, the same as we can find no vice in a saint. It was because he had not in view his personal elevation, the grandeur of his family, or the enriching of his children, but the glory of Jesus Christ, the aggrandizement of Castile, Christian civilization, and the good government of the Indies, and to develop and

make the most of the resources of these countries for the advantage of the people. Believing in the perpetuity of his work, Columbus did not sacrifice to the present the resources of the future.

Notwithstanding his active search for gold, as soon as he became governor of these new countries, very far from occupying himself principally with gold mines and working them, he paid special attention to the culture of the earth — the first and the last object of all real colonization.

Under the name of "Royal Farm," he established an agricultural institution where there were preserved, in the purity of their blood, reproductive animals of each species. By his care plantations were multiplied, and attempts made at horticulture and in the acclimating of plants and animals. He felt that it was necessary to abandon the European regimen for that of the Indians, and he tried to get the colonists to adopt the fare of the latter. In this his sagacity was in advance of the dear-bought lessons of experience. In place of bachelors, thirsting for gold, and incapable of attaching themselves to the soil to cultivate it, he wished to admit only married persons of industrious habits, who would cultivate the earth, clear the forests, make canals for irrigating the lands, or attend to the raising of live stock.

SECTION III.

The temporary deprivation of the Admiral of the government of the Indies having been decided on, the choice of the Queen fell on a personage in high favor with the King, and an intimate friend of Fonseca's. He was grave and courteous in his manners, and fluent in speech. He was the commander of Lares, and his name was Nicolas de Ovando.

The splendid fleet appointed to convey Ovando to his new government, consisted of thirty-two sail. The director-general, the paymaster Ximeno de Breviesca, and Gonsalvo Gomez de Cervantes, by extraordinary activity, managed to

have the ships ready to sail in less than six months. If Columbus were a man that could be governed by envy, he could not without displeasure, and even suspicion, behold this warlike machinery, this display of force accorded to a temporary governor. The superintendent of the marine, who had formerly refused him the gratuitous passage of a single domestic, now found no difficulty of accommodating ten mounted body guards, and twelve foot guards, for the new governor, who also had with him some officers of high rank, and went surrounded with pomp which the Viceroy would not have dared to think of. Evidently the temporary governor was favored otherwise than was the governor who had a perpetual and hereditary title.

SECTION IV.

But suspicions and vulgar jealousies did not easily find their way to the great heart of Columbus. While the equipment of the fleet was going on, he, in his retreat, occupied with prayer, study, and the meditation of heavenly truths, lost sight of the intrigues of the Court and the petty agitations of the world. A sublimer ambition engrossed his thoughts. It was not enough to have discovered a new continent; it remained for him to receive the reward of his labors.

Human glory was incapable of remunerating him. It was from the Most High that he expected a recompense. Columbus hoped that, as a crowning of his favors, the Divine Majesty deigned to reserve for him the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre, hitherto refused to the efforts of the Crusaders.

It is known that such was the constant desire of Columbus. Since his third voyage, by which he had so much enlarged the known space of the earth, he longed to put this heroic project in execution. Sometimes with his friends, the Franciscans of Granada, sometimes with those of

Zubia, where he spent his time in intimate acquaintance with the Summa of the Angelical Doctor, in reading the masters of theology, in nourishing his spirit with the delights of the Holy Scriptures, and in trying to discover in apocalyptic images some luminous rays that would throw light on the question of the Holy Places, attract the attention of the Catholic Sovereigns to them, and induce them to engage in the glorious enterprise of delivering them.

Sometimes, in the intervals of his researches, the contemplator of the WORD, electrified with the poetry of Israel and with the sublime hymns of the Church, tried also to render into verse the emotions prompted by his piety. A poet in sentiment, he was still more so in expression, even in the language of his adopted country.

The religious stanzas of Columbus, unhappily, are lost. The last vestiges of them are found in the sketch of his work on the Prophecies,* where they were inserted at random. His poetry, like Christian genius, is grave and solemn. One perceives in it disenchantment from the world, the depths of faith, and the logic of divine things. His longest piece has for subject, "The End of Man." Columbus develops in six strophes, each commencing with a Latin word, this Catholic maxim: *Memorare novissima tua et non peccabis in æternum*. "Remember thy last end and thou wilt never sin." These six strophes bear the stamp of the grandeur and the inflexibility of our dogmas. In them are found those profound impressions, that longing desire for heaven, and that horror for sin which are so characteristic of holy souls. If, in a language become tardily his, and which he began to lisp only towards his forty-ninth year, Columbus showed himself a poet, what

* Unfortunately the paraphrase of the *Memorare novissima tua*; the commencement of an ode on the birth of St. John the Baptist, entitled, "Gozos del nacimiento de S. Juan Bautista;" a stanza on the subject of Christian duty; and here and there some detached verses on the leaves of the LIBRO DE LAS PROFECIAS,—compose solely what is come down to us of the poetry of Columbus.

harmonious effusions would he not have uttered in the idiom of Dante and of Tasso, the sweet language of his youth?

This fact of poetic inspiration occurring to Columbus in his adversity and his old age, appears to us worthy of remark. Some great geniuses and great saints also composed poetical pieces in their last years. Youth begins with poetry, and old age returns to it as a solace and a consolation. But this return to poetry,—a reflection of the eternal youth of the soul,—seems to be the exclusive recompense of an age which has become gray in the practice of virtue. To recall here only one example: a little before his death the great Bossuet employed himself in translating the Psalms of David into French verse. At a distance of two centuries these two sublime characters experienced the same desire, and sought in the same source for its gratification.

For nearly seven months, in concert with some religious *savants* well versed in sacred letters, Columbus carefully examined the Scriptures and the ecclesiastical authors, in order to unite the several texts, and point out the interpretations that had reference to the events he had accomplished, as well as the passages that were applicable to the tomb of the Saviour. At length, his work appearing to him complete, on the thirteenth of September, 1501, he sent a copy of it to a learned theologian of Seville, Father Gaspard Gorricio, a Carthusian, to be examined, and, if need be, enriched with additions.

This precious manuscript, which was designed for the Sovereigns, has been lost. Its rough draft formed a large handsome octavo volume of eighty-four leaves, with the title of “A Collection of Prophecies on the Recovery of Jerusalem and the Discovery of the Indies.” Humboldt has no hesitation in calling this production “the sketch of the extravagant work of the *Profecias*.” He has even disdainfully called it “his pagan and biblical *Profecias*.”* The high repute

* *Examen Critique*, etc., t. 1., p. 102.

of his name has caused this judgment to be accepted, which tends to depreciate Columbus in the esteem of erudite scholars. We cannot acquiesce in this sentence, which was passed unjustly, and without an examination of the fragments of the work that remain. We first notice two points: Humboldt acknowledges that the extravagant work is only a sketch, or rough draft; and he admits that several religious aided Columbus in the work.

In truth, the printed fragment of the "extravagant work" looked over by Humboldt, is only a *sketch*, a kind of rough draft traced by another hand than that of Columbus. The passages collected, and the authorities diversely classed, are not united by any reasoning, and present only a simple collection of materials. Is it permissible to judge soundly of a work from the fragments of a sketch, or a rough draft abridged by a mutilation of fourteen pages? The learned religious who aided Columbus in his book, did not consider it "an extravagant work." The erudite Carthusian of Seville had this work in its entirety, that is to say, completed by fourteen pages, which a criminal hand afterwards retrenched from the *sketch*, — the only copy that has come down to us. These fourteen pages must have formed the most important part of this work; Muños, and Navarrete agree in this opinion. It was because he possessed this manuscript whole and entire that Father Gaspard Gorricio conceived a very different opinion of it from that of Humboldt.

The learned Carthusian addressed several letters to Columbus on the subject. As soon as he received and read the manuscript, he wrote to him that he would endeavor to comply with his desire, and that the more so because he hoped to profit by it, and whet his intellect with an occupation so useful, so consoling, so instructive, so conducive to the service of God, and so promotive of the good, as well as the honor of Spain and of the whole Christian world. After having thoroughly examined the work, he declares that he can add to it but very little, because

Columbus had already collected the cream of all the authorities, sentences, words and prophecies in the Holy Scriptures, and in the commentators. He found that what was left to him to glean was meagre. Nevertheless, with fervor and interior consolation he gave himself to his task. Elevating himself to the generous views of the contemplator of Creation, Father Gaspard Gorricio prayed to the Almighty to enlighten him in his researches, in order that he may respond to the "holy desires"* of His Excellency the Viceroy of the Indies.

The work of Columbus on the Prophecies having for sole object the deliverance of the holy places, the Admiral does not insist on the advantages of this conquest. The two Sovereigns knew his project. He had apprised them of it before his first expedition, had again spoken to them about it on his return from his second voyage, and returned to it before he went to discover the new continent; consequently he deduces no motive of the kind from it. But, as he founded his views on the authority of the Sacred Writings to accredit the exclusively religious aim of the proposed expedition, he first lays down, as an introduction to his work, certain principles for a sound interpretation, drawn from St. Augustine, St. Thomas, St. Isidore, and Gerson. Then entering on his subject, he recalls to mind the marvellous manner in which he was chosen to accomplish several expressions of the prophets, and especially those of Isaias, relative to the nations on the confines of the globe.

Notwithstanding the number of his enemies, who watched every opportunity to ruin him, and the vigilance of the Inquisition, then so watchful to repress every expression in the least doubtful as regarded Catholic orthodoxy, Columbus writes without guile that the Most Holy Trinity inspired him with the first idea of his enterprise; that it was the Redeemer, that is to say, the Word made flesh, who indicated to him the route; that our Lord, showing himself

* *Respuesta del P. D. Frey Gaspar Gorricio.*

propitious to his desire, had accorded to him the spirit of understanding, and that He had afterwards opened his intelligence in a manner almost palpable, giving him the necessary force for the execution of his project.* He states that, in his Discovery, the sciences and mathematics were of but little use to him, and that it was from God alone he received the idea, as well as the resolution, which were crowned with success.

Assuredly, if we be disengaged from every prejudice, we will find neither exaggerations nor “extravagances” in this work on the prophecies. For our own part, we admire its erudition, its loftiness of view, and its clearness of reasoning. As to his accomplishment of the prophecies, Columbus only asserts a fact that was already declared such six years before by the noble lapidary of Burgos, Jaime Ferrer, and since then admitted by Christian philosophers, bishops, and princes of the Church of eminent merit.

The servant of God, seeking to penetrate into all the secrets of our globe, and measuring the zeal of others by his own, hoped, now that he had brought distant countries in communication with each other, that the name of the Saviour would be speedily borne throughout the whole earth. In the ardor of his faith, he fearlessly deduced from this evangelical result that all nations would soon be converted to Christ, and that all peoples being once ranged under the same law and the same Chief Pastor, the end of the world would not be very distant.

The accomplishment of the prophecies, and the infallibility of the word of God, are the bases of his induction: our Lord has said, “that before the consummation of the world, all that was written by the prophets should be fulfilled.” From these words, by a series of reasonings which a mutilation of fourteen pages prevents us from fully appreciating, he concludes the necessity of speedily delivering

* *Libro de las Profecias.*

the Holy Sepulchre, — not to give Spain a political advantage, but to make a gift of it to the Catholic Church.

What the disciple of the Word ardently desired, was the deliverance from the yoke of the infidels of the land of miracles, to unite Jerusalem with Rome, and to give the tomb of the Saviour to the successor of the prince of the apostles. Thus Palestine would have appertained to the Holy see, according to the natural bond which unites the old Jerusalem to the new Jerusalem, the same as the Old Testament to the New Testament. The Holy Places would have been added to the domain of St. Peter, as an appanage of his right of apostolical primogeniture. The question of the Holy Places, that gordian knot of the religious interests of the future, would have been untied by the gold of the new world, or severed by the sword of its discoverer, and would not now have served as a pretext to the ambition of Greek and Russian schismatics, who pretend to be the orthodox church.

Columbus thought that, with the income from his dues of tenth and eighth, he could undertake this enterprise. On two occasions he made in his budget calculations of raising an army of a hundred thousand infantry and ten thousand cavalry.* At the time when he was making this pious calculation, he was not receiving of his revenues enough to buy a cloak with. The two thousand ducats the Queen ordered to be paid him in Cadiz were used in the concerns of his house, as well as in those of the house of the Adelantado. It was necessary for him to sustain in Cordova the modest establishment of his wife, and also to provide for his brother Diego, who was inclined to separate altogether from the world. In his double quality of Viceroy and Grand Admiral, he was obliged to maintain a kind of state, and had to keep a certain number of officers and of domestics. After more than a year's stay in Spain, his resources had become exhausted.

* *Carta del Almirante Colon a su Santidad.*

Still, when we remember the strict principles of order and domestic economy which the Admiral always exhibited, we cannot easily conceive, even allowing for his exceptional expenses, how he could be thus reduced to destitution. We cannot doubt that his liberality to hospitals, and his charity to the poor, — those friends of God, — materially contributed to his pecuniary embarrassments. In all probability, counting on his revenues then due, and which ought to amount to eight thousand ducats, he must have discharged a debt of gratitude as well as of piety, in refunding to the Franciscan community of Granada what he had formerly received at La Rabida.

But, as he did not receive that year the sums that were due him from Hispaniola, and that a first remittance of four thousand ducats did not come until the second of August, 1502, he was without available funds. He who had given Castile lands a hundred times larger than herself, was without a foot of earth, a garden to walk in, or a roof to shelter his head. He was reduced to live in a hotel, and was often without the means of paying his bill. But a thing otherwise painful to his charity was his not having a small piece of money to give as an offering when he was at church. It was his not having anything to offer to the Church and to the poor, that made him most regret his destitution. Columbus does not speak of this drawback which tends to diminish the becoming splendor of his rank, and to lower the dignity of his titles. To him, poverty is not painful but so far as it injures the poor, whom he cannot assist.

The discredit cast on the colony prevented the Admiral from receiving any advances. His embarrassment, his want of pecuniary credit, and the unfriendliness of the government, were notorious, and became known abroad. A letter of the secretary of the Venetian embassy in Spain, in which Angelo Trivigiano boasts of his having become the "great friend" of Columbus, shows at the same time his embarrassment, and his inexhaustible bounty.

The grandees, who take as the guide of their conduct the favor of the Court, abandoned the old navigator. With the exception of the Franciscans and some learned foreigners, no visitors came to trouble the solitude of the fallen Viceroy. He now saw that he who devotes himself to the interests of all, obtains no individual gratitude. Lightened from the burden of an administration, he with more freedom raised his thoughts to God. Sublime transports more frequently elevated his soul into the inscrutable heights of celestial converse. The contemplator of the WORD found in his forced leisure some consoling compensations. The ingratitude of the King, and the injustice of public opinion, served only to detach Columbus more and more from temporal concerns, and led him, like the Apostle of the Gentiles, the happy admirer of the invisible—St. Paul—to live in Christ only, and to wish to possess no other science but Jesus, and Him crucified.

CHAPTER IX.

The real Motives of Columbus for undertaking the Fourth Voyage.

— Before his Departure he indicates, in an unfinished Chart to the Queen, the Isthmus of Panama. — Don Bartholomew accompanies him through Affection alone. — Columbus writes to the Holy Father, and informs him of his Project to deliver the Holy Sepulchre. — His Precautions against the Enmity of Ferdinand.

SECTION I.

FAR from seeking repose from the fatigues of a seafaring life, and from struggles against the wickedness of men, Columbus, tired of a state of inaction, which would not turn to the advantage of Catholicity, proposed to the Queen to pursue his discoveries without delay.

Modern historians, judging by humanitarian principles the motives of this exemplary Christian, have attributed his proposition to the fear of being forestalled by petty rivals — by men who had ventured in his traces, and had already acquired some celebrity. It is by envy, by maritime emulation, and by ambition alone, that they explain the zeal, the ardor of which urged him, in spite of his advanced age and infirmities, to search, attentively, the terrestrial space which still had remained unexplored.

Here there is a complete mistake; an interpretation different from the reality. But it is a natural consequence of the prejudices these writers entertain in regard to a man who was a model of disinterestedness and of faith. We can state positively that Columbus then, and for some time before, was under no illusion in regard to the Court, and that he no longer expected either favors or riches from it. It was solely to glorify the Redeemer, to bear the standard of the Cross to the rest of the earth, and thus to complete the work of his discoveries, that he wished to

enter again on the task he proposed to himself. During his voyage, he wrote to the Sovereigns: "I have not made this voyage in order to obtain honor or fortune; this is certain, as every hope in regard to this matter had already vanished before my departure." *

Having found the New World, he thought that the first object of his mission being attained, it remained for him to make a tour of the globe and redeem the Holy Sepulchre, in order that, after having shown the emblem of salvation to peoples until then unknown, they could freely bring their adorations to the tomb of the Saviour. He desired, before dying, to open the route for them.

A secret attraction united itself to his religious fervor, to urge him to this voyage: it was the happiness of contemplating the unknown parts of the earth. The frosts of age had by no means cooled down the ardor of his enthusiasm for the works of nature. Columbus could never get tired of admiring the creation, and raising his soul to the Creator. No man in the world had seen such an extent of ocean and shore as he had. The more he saw, the larger became his notions of the magnificences of the WORD, and the more complete the grandeur of his impressions.

A marvellous circumstance! In the midst of the wonders of the Alhambra, a sudden mental illumination showed Columbus, across space and the unknown, an image of the globe, and indicated to him, between the two grand divisions of the new continent, a narrow space, which should serve as a point of communication between these immense regions; only, in this mysterious intuition, he took an isthmus for a strait. He spoke of a strait of the sea while it was only one of land that existed, and showed Isabella, on an incomplete chart of the unexplored world, the point where this strait ought to be found, and by which one could go to Asia. He pointed it out with an astonishing precision. Washington Irving acknowledges he conjectured

* *Letter of Columbus to the Catholic Sovereigns*, written from Jamaica the seventh of July, 1503.

that this strait was situated about the Isthmus of Darien,* and, in fact, it is there the land strait is placed which unites the two great divisions of the new continent.

The Queen having approved of the design, Columbus set about the preparations for his expedition. He asked for permission to take with him his second son, Don Fernando, who was a page to the Queen, and happily endowed, and whose society would, in some measure, make up for the separation from his family which his mission imposed on him. Always considerate and maternal in her bounties, the Queen acceded to his desire, and accorded the pay of a naval officer to young Fernando.

The Admiral afterwards repaired to Seville, to give orders about his voyage. While confiding himself, without reserve, to the care of Providence, he did not omit the precautions that human prudence dictated. He engaged the Adelantado to accompany him in this voyage. This valorous mariner, undeceived in regard to the Court of Castile, and attaining the age when repose is a compensation for advancing years, did not participate in the Catholic enthusiasm of the Admiral, and was but little disposed to expose himself to the perils of an expedition of this kind. Nevertheless, seeing the advanced age and physical infirmities of his brother, which the energy of his will prevented him from feeling; remembering the state he was in on his return from his two last voyages of discovery; and considering that his presence would be absolutely necessary for him, Don Bartholomew sacrificed anew to fraternal love his personal feelings, his need of repose, and his resolution of never again serving a government that was so ungrateful: so he consented to embark with the Admiral.

As to Don Diego, the other brother of the Admiral, the crying injustice committed towards the Viceroy, and his experience of the wickedness of men, appear to have fixed him in his vocation. He resolved to quit the Court and the

* *History of Christopher Columbus and His Voyages*, B. xiv., c. v.

world,—to serve, in future, only the Church. He embraced the ecclesiastical state, the life of which he already led amid the cares of government.

SECTION II.

Since the death of his countryman, Pope Innocent VIII., Columbus had not yet entered into correspondence with his successor in the See of the Prince of the Apostles. In departing on this voyage, which ought to be the completion of his expeditions, the Herald of the Cross wrote to the Chief of the Church, to render him an account of his silence, of his actions, and of his intentions, and to invoke his protecting coöperation.

From the noble and familiar style of this letter, one would say that an august relationship attached the mission of Columbus to the destinies of Catholicity. One notices in it the confidence of a son who speaks to his father. Though a laic, a married man, and the father of a family, Columbus asks, as a matter of course, and without mentioning his titles, for a delegation of spiritual authority,—just as a veritable legate of the Holy See would have done. He prays the Supreme Pontiff to issue a Brief, prescribing to the heads of all the religious Orders to let him choose in their convents six religious to make Apostolic missionaries of them, and whom he reserved to himself the right of nominating, directly or by his agent, and to the departure of whom no ecclesiastical or secular power could oppose itself. He wishes that, at their return to their convents, these religious should be received there, and treated as if they had not left them, and even with more favor, if their works should merit it. He asks for some coöperators, because he hopes, in our Blessed Lord, that he will be able to proclaim His holy Name, and His Gospel, in the whole universe.*

* *Carta del Almirante Colon a su Santidad*; Coleccion Diplom. Docum., num. CXLV.

Not being able, from its length, to give the whole letter here, we abridge its contents.

Columbus says, first, that when he departed on his first voyage of discovery he had formed the resolution of coming personally, on his return, to bring to his Holiness an account of that expedition; but that the pretensions of Portugal obliged him to go in all haste on his second voyage, and that thus he was not able to effect his resolution. He speaks also of his third voyage towards the south-west, in which he found immense lands, and sea-water which was quite fresh.

He says that his heart will abound with joy and delectation when, at last, he will be able to come to his Holiness with the whole history of his discoveries, which he has expressly written for him in the form and manner of the Commentaries of Cæsar, — from the first moment to the present day, when he feels disposed to make, in the name of the Blessed Trinity, a new voyage, which will be for its glory and the honor of the holy Christian religion. The Herald of the Cross declares to the Holy Father that the very object of his toils is a recreation to him; and such, that he fears no dangers, and is disposed to regard as nothing the labors and the divers kinds of deaths with which he is menaced, without the world having returned him the least gratitude. He has entered on his enterprise with the intention of employing the revenues which would result to him from it, in restoring the Holy Sepulchre to the Church. He recalls the fact that, after his arrival in the new region, he wrote to the King and the Queen that, before seven years, he would raise fifty thousand infantry and five thousand cavalry; and in five years would double the number, and thus would have an army of a hundred thousand foot and ten thousand horse. Our Lord had palpably given him the proof that the funds could accrue from his revenues; but that Satan put all his efforts in play, so that at that time nothing could be realized. The government was violently taken from him. Behind all these iniquities, he

saw a manœuvre of the eternal enemy, who was afraid that so pious a design should be accomplished.

The rough sketch which we possess of this letter, dictated by the Admiral to his young son Fernando, remains unfinished; but there can be no doubt that it was terminated, and that it made part of the package which he had charged Francisco de Rivarol to send to Rome. We have implicit proofs of this circumstance.

Looking from afar towards his departure, Columbus drew up a memorandum for his son Diego, in which he sets forth his rights and titles, and the manner in which they may be maintained. This precaution evinces his fears. The unfriendly disposition of the King was known to him. Fearing that in his absence, or after his death, which may take place in some distant region, open spoliation would be superadded to the violences already committed against him, and that he would be robbed of the papers and parchments containing his titles and privileges, he intrusted them to his faithful friends, the religious, and put them for safe keeping in their convents.

While resorting to these measures of prudence, he did not the less omit writing to the Sovereigns, recommending to them his children and his brothers, in case he should succumb during this voyage. His letter betrays his uneasiness. Isabella, who was then in Valencia de la Torre, to quiet his anxiety, wrote him a letter, signed by the two monarchs, and couched in extraordinary terms of deference and consideration. The Sovereigns remind him of the grief they experienced at his incarceration, as everybody knew; they promise to do much more for him than have been specified in his privileges; and reiterate the assurance that, after his death, they will put his eldest son, Don Diego, in possession of his titles, offices, and dignities.

Notwithstanding these royal promises, Columbus continued taking his measures to guard against the ill-will of the Court. He intrusted to the jurisconsult, Nicolo Oderigo, ambassador from the Republic of Genoa, a copy of his

Privileges, which he kept in a chest at the convent of the Carthusians, in Seville. Not only did he intrust Oderigo with copies of all his titles, but he also confided to his care the letter of the fourteenth of March, he had just received. Francisco de Rivarol was charged with the task of forwarding them. Columbus requested his countryman to apprise, secretly, his son Don Diego of the place in which he would have deposited them.

Fearing his enemies would make some attempts on everything that pertained to his name, his rights, and his honors, he deposited with the Franciscans and the Hieronymites duplicate copies of his treaties with the Sovereigns. Having done this, he occupied himself unremittingly with the preparations for his voyage.

As in the days of his poetic youth, thrilling with hope, and unshakable in his resolution, Columbus again takes to the sea. He no longer goes in order to serve a king whose ingratitude and secret hostility are but too well known to him, but sacrificing himself in advance for the good of the whole human race. It was only by works still more prodigious than those he had already effected that he hoped to be able to break through the obstacles raised by the Court, and attain to his definite object, — the deliverance of the Holy Tomb. *Terra firma* being now discovered, it seemed to him that, if he should be able to pass the strait which must exist towards the middle of the new continent, nothing more could prevent him from circumnavigating the globe, and that he could return to Spain by Asia and the African coast. For this voyage of discovery, he counted on the providential assistance which had always sustained him in the most critical moments; and it was with the ardor of youth that, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, Columbus launched into the regions of the unknown, the veil of which he hoped this time to remove completely.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER I.

Columbus departs with four Ships. — He succors the Portuguese Fortress of Arcilla, besieged by the Moors. — The Governor of Hispaniola opposes his entrance into the Port. — Columbus predicts a violent Tempest, and begs the Governor to delay the Fleet that was about to sail for Spain. — His prediction is sneered at, but the Tempest comes and the Fleet perishes. — Judgment of God visible. — Columbus, with his Ships, preserved.

SECTION I.

OBLIGED to condense into one volume the history of this wonderful man, we have to abridge the recital of the principal events of his life, and omit every incident in which he is not personally concerned. For this reason we are obliged to sacrifice the graces of style to brevity. But we will accept without a murmur the charges of dryness and of meagreness which will be made against us, provided we can, notwithstanding the narrowness of our limits, reproduce at least the principal features of this extraordinary character.

The fourth expedition of Columbus has been the least noticed of all his voyages, though, in his own estimation, it was the noblest and the most advantageous. Several writers have been, in fact, ignorant of it altogether.

At the present day, to recompose in its reality the recital of this prodigious enterprise,* independently of the testi-

mony of Spanish historians, we possess four cotemporary narrations that were written by eye-witnesses, and persons who were among the principal actors in this memorable voyage. These are, first, the Relation of the Admiral, addressed in the form of a letter to the Catholic Sovereigns; next, the History written by Fernando Columbus, partly from memory and partly from the notes of his father; then, the Summary of its dramatic incidents, made by Diego Mendez; and, lastly, the Notes and the Journal of the Notary-Royal, Diego de Porras, an enemy of Columbus.

No other maritime expedition of that period furnishes so many minute circumstances, or presents history with such vouchers for its veracity.

SECTION II.

After meeting with the usual opposition from the Bureaus of Seville, Columbus at length succeeded in getting ready a little squadron of four caravels, the smallest of which was of only fifty tons burthen, and the largest seventy. They were named the *Capitana*, commanded by Diego Tristan, on board of which the Admiral took his place; the *St. James*, commanded by one of the Porras; the *Galician*, commanded by Pedro de Torreros; and the *Biscayan*, commanded by Berthelemy Fieschi.

With the exception of the two brothers, Francisco and Diego de Porras, whom he accepted solely to please Morales, the Treasurer-Royal, his other officers he chose from among men who were proper for such an enterprise, and the greater part of whom had been schooled in his former voyages. Among this number, however, we are not to count the physician forced on him by the Bureaus of Seville, — a certain charlatan who was formerly an apothecary in Valencia, named Bernal, — a perverted character, whose attentions were dreaded by the sick, and who, in the estimation of the Admiral, deserved to be many times hanged and quartered, if justice were rendered to his deeds.

Without counting the officers of his household and his four interpreters, the Admiral took with him, in these four little vessels, a hundred and fifty men. Each caravel was furnished with provision for two years. It was with this little armament that he undertook to circumnavigate the globe, to defend himself against every aggression from unknown peoples, among whom he would probably be obliged to get fresh supplies of provision, and repair damages done to his ships.

The squadron, when ready to sail, was detained in the Bay of Cadiz by south winds. During this forced stay, a boat, which was driven by the contrary winds on the coast, brought information that the Moors were blockading the Portuguese fortress of Arcilla, on the side of Maroc. Immediately on hearing this, the Admiral, a true Knight of the Cross, not caring for the adverse winds, set sail for that port and arrived there speedily.

The sight of the Spanish vessels sufficed to put the Moors to flight, who had, besides, encountered a vigorous defence. The Governor of the place, while gallantly defending the ramparts, received a wound. The Admiral sent his son, his brother, and the captains of the caravels to wait upon him, with expressions of friendship and civility, and offers of the service of the squadron. The Governor received the deputation with marks of the highest regard, lavished caresses on young Fernando, and sent his chief officers to wait on the Grand Admiral in return, some of whom had, the honor of being connections of his by their relationship to his first wife, Doña Felippa Moñi de Perestrello.

Columbus continued his voyage the same day. As if he had received a return for his zeal, the wind became favorable. "The Lord afterwards gave me such auspicious weather that I came here in four days," he says, writing to Father Gorricio from Great Canary, where he stopped to take in wood, water, etc. In this letter he says he goes on this voyage in the name of the Blessed Trinity, and that it

is thus he hopes for the victory.* This militant expression discloses his only wish. Christopher Columbus saw at the bottom of all the contrarieties that had retarded the accomplishment of his work, the conflict of the spirit of the world with the spirit of the Church, of which he was the champion. His life was a continual warfare against the prince of this world, and he hoped to triumph over him at last. He terminates his letter by recommending himself to the prayers of the Father Prior, and of the whole saintly community.

On the evening of the twenty-fifth of May, Columbus took his departure for the New World. The winds were so favorable that in sixteen days the little squadron reached the group of Caribbee islands. They touched at St. Lucy, whence they sailed for Martinique, and afterwards to the island of St. John, now called Porto Rico.

From the latter island, Columbus directed his course to San Domingo, in order to deliver there the letters with which he was charged, and to exchange the *Galician* for one of the fleet which he knew would be returning to Spain, under the command of Antonio de Torres; because, notwithstanding the fine weather, he had seen the defects of the *Galician*. She sailed very badly, could not carry any canvas, and delayed the other caravels.

The twenty-ninth of June, the squadron having arrived before the port of San Domingo, they cast anchor at a league from land. The Admiral sent the captain of the *Galician*, Pedro de Torreros, in his long-boat, to state, himself, to the Governor the necessity he was under of procuring another vessel, and to request him to let him have one of the caravels that were going to sail, or to furnish him with another one, for which the Admiral would pay out of his own pocket. He was also to ask, on the part of the Admiral, for permission to enter the port with his four caravels, to put himself in shelter from a violent tempest which he foresaw was approaching.

* *Cartas del Almirante, al R. P. Gaspar.*

The Governor, who, in regard to the Admiral, had received particular orders from the Sovereigns, and who knew he was interdicted from touching at Hispaniola, objected to his request, — the formal orders of the Sovereigns. It is evident the need of repairs of damages, or taking refuge in a storm, was not foreseen. Undoubtedly Ovando could have given permission for landing; but he feared to displease the bureaux of marine, if he should accede to the Admiral's demand. Perhaps, also, he was not convinced of the necessity of replacing with another a vessel one that had been at sea scarcely two months. As to the need of escaping from a tempest, — the serenity of the atmosphere, the brightness of the sun, and the azured calm of the waves, gave it the air of a joke. Not only did he refuse giving the Admiral another ship, but he even forbade him landing.

All that had been requested being refused, the captain of the *Galician* returned to give the Admiral an account of the failure of his mission. He was able, in passing, to count thirty-four vessels ready to sail. It was the fleet Torres was to take back to Spain, to which were added two caravels belonging to Rodrigo de Bastidas.

It is not easy to imagine the indignation with which the great man was seized in being thus repulsed “from a land and ports which, by the will of God, he had gained for Spain at the price of his blood.” This refusal, so contrary to the laws of humanity, and to the usages of seafaring life, spread consternation among the crews. They regretted being under the command of a man whom such a rigor seemed to reject from the natural rights of man. They were seized with the most dismal forebodings.

But, however poignant may have been the indignation the Admiral felt at this heartless refusal, his humanity, his Christian charity, outweighed his resentment. He sent word anew to the Governor, entreating him at least to detain the fleet that was about to sail, and not to let it depart for eight days, because the hurricane would extend

to distant regions; and that, for his own part, he would go without delay to seek a shelter from it.

Though Ovando was persuaded that the Admiral sought a pretext to show himself in the city, as he knew nothing of navigation himself, he determined to have the counsel of the pilots and of the commandant Antonio de Torres. It must be acknowledged that no atmospheric appearance seemed to justify the prediction of the Admiral, and accordingly it was decided that the fleet should depart at the time set for it. The pilots, in looking at the heavens, merrily jeered at the inauspicious announcement of the old Admiral, who was looked upon as a morose dotard, a false prophet.

Columbus, much embarrassed about the state of the *Galician*, saw no better expedient than to give the worst ship the best captain. Accordingly he passed over to her, as her chief captain, his brother Bartholomew, — a man fertile in resources, — and immediately sought shelter along a neighboring coast. At some leagues distant he found a small cove sufficiently shut, where he managed as best he could, and made every preparation for receiving the hurricane with as much haste as if he actually saw it coming.

SECTION III.

Meanwhile, the placid appearance of the sea, the brightness of the heavens, and the gentleness of the breezes, put those who were going to depart in high spirits. Ovando had given all the rebels leave to return to Spain. The greater number of them desired nothing more, as their fortunes were already made. Besides, they took with them quantities of gold, capable of soothing or buying their judges.

They were distributed, to the number of five hundred, among different caravels. Bobadilla, the ex-governor, who consoled himself for his disgrace with piles of gold, took his place in the commandant's ship. Roldan also, deprived

of office and called to render an account of his rebellion, had heaped in this vessel masses of gold, obtained by every kind of rapine during his revolt. This vessel also took with her a large amount of gold for the royal treasury. Never was there such a quantity of gold seen at the same time. Other riches, equally acquired at the expense of justice and humanity, and paid for with the blood and the lives of the unfortunate Indians, were heaped up in each of the other caravels.

The fleet had come, with a gentle breeze, off Cape Raphael, — a distance of about eight leagues, — when the wind began to cease; then suddenly disquieting signs showed themselves. The heavens became murky; the light of day soon declined; the air became heavy and suffocating. It was the prelude to the tempest.

Though they were in sight of land, they could not seek refuge there. No breath of wind would move the sails, which hung flaccid from the masts. The ocean became dull and green, and as motionless as a lead coffin. It was no longer possible to return to port, or to escape the danger of the coast by taking to the high sea.

The tempest soon followed the threat. More than twenty-six caravels, all laden with gold, were involved in wreck and ruin beneath the surges; others were borne by the foamy waves to unknown latitudes, where they foundered.

Of the whole of this superb fleet, there returned to Hispaniola only two or three vessels, shattered and half swamped; whilst one only, the oldest and the smallest of all, continued her route to Europe. She was named the *Aguja*, and “carried all the Admiral’s money, which consisted of four thousand pieces of gold; and was the first that arrived in Castile, as if by the favor of God.”* The crazy vessels that returned to Hispaniola brought with them the poorest and the most obscure persons of the fleet; there

* Herrera. *Hist. gen. des Voyages et Conquetes des Castillans dans les Indes Occid.*, dec. I, liv. v., chap. II.

was among them but one hidalgo, Rodrigo de Bastidas. He was "a very honest man,"* and had also been inhumanly persecuted by Bobadilla.

On this terrible day perished, without a single exception, the traitors, the calumniators, and the sworn enemies of Columbus. "There," says Herrera, "perished Francisco de Bobadilla, — he who had sent away the Admiral and his brothers with irons on their feet, without trial, or giving him an opportunity to defend himself. There also ended his days the rebel Francisco Roldan, and a number of his accomplices, who had risen in arms against the Sovereigns and against the Admiral, whose bread they had eaten, and who had tyrannized over the Indians. There also perished the cacique Guarionex (who had obstinately refused to receive the Gospel). The two thousand pieces of gold were submerged with that *pepite* of gold of prodigious size."† Everything was lost. The sea swallowed all these iniquitous riches, and their iniquitous possessors, to the number of five hundred men.‡

During the occurrence of this disaster, the Admiral, retired in the little cove, left the hurricane to roar, and confided himself to the care of God.

During the day, the four caravels held out against the buffeting of the winds as well as they could, and held their places. But "the tempest was terrible during the night, and separated the vessels." In the midst of the obscurity three of the vessels were wrung from the port, leaving the *Capitana* alone. Each of the three was driven to a different quarter, expecting nothing but death, and thinking that the others were hopelessly lost. They had to abandon themselves to the violence of the waves. The *Galician*, which, happily, was commanded by the Adelantado, lost

* Rafael Maria Baralt. *Resumen de la Historia de Venezuela*, t. I., chap. vii.

† *Ibid.* Dec. I, liv. v., chap. ii.

‡ Oviedo y Valdes. *Hist. Nat. et gen. des Indes*, liv. iii., chap. ix.

her long-boat. He had to let her go, in order to save the caravel. They were compelled to hold out to the high sea. The three caravels were much shattered, and lost large parts of their riggings, and of their provisions. The vessel of the Admiral, although frightfully shaken, received no damage. He himself says: "Our Lord preserved the one I was in in such a manner, that, though strangely assailed, she did not suffer the least damage." After having been driven before the winds for several days, the four caravels met each other again at the port of Azua, on Sunday, as if to celebrate together this holy day, and thank God for His manifest protection. The circumstances of this unexpected reunion appear to have struck even the Admiral himself, who was so much accustomed to the bounties of the Divine Majesty.

This disaster was not considered as a simple accident; all cotemporary writers looked upon it as a providential chastisement. The action of Divine justice was here so manifest, that, without exception, all the historians of the time contemplated it with awe.

If the discernment of the tempest, which spares the innocent and treats with rigor the guilty; casts in the abyss of the ocean the riches accumulated at the price of their souls, — and if the pass, or safe-conduct, given amid the yawning abysses to the little treasure of the Admiral, which was maliciously placed in the most fragile of the caravels, — strike us with astonishment, this astonishment will be changed into amazement in thinking of the protection which, during this same moment, shields the person of the Admiral and his squadron in the sea of the Antilles.

Benzoni, who lived in Hispaniola forty years after this event, and who still could hear some eye-witnesses of it, cannot avoid seeing, here, the execution of a Divine judgment.* The chastisement of the rebels, and the loss of

* Giralomo Benzoni. — *La Historia del Nuovo Mondo*, lib. I., fogl. xxiv.

their iniquitous riches, appeared to him a salutary example given to the world, and a high lesson in historic philosophy.

SECTION IV.

The prediction of Columbus, its terrible accomplishment, the immunity accorded to the little treasure of the messenger of the Cross, the preservation of his four caravels, and the exemption of his own from every damage, — facts which are attested by eye-witnesses, by official and other authentic documents, and by all historians, — cannot now be called in question.

It is a remarkable fact, that nobody has ever dared to attribute such a chain of circumstances to Chance, — that complaisant patron of the difficult which some people are pleased to charge with the unforeseen and the extraordinary, when our reason does not find an explanation that satisfies it.

It is in vain that one would attempt to explain this stupendous event on natural principles, or that he would attribute it to the consummate ability and experience of the Admiral. A prediction of this kind is beyond and above the facts of observation or of experience. Ask men who have made navigation a specialty — ask sea-captains and pilots, and they will tell you of the impossibility of such a prediction, or prophecy, from the data of nautical science. The learned Arago did not believe in the possibility of predicting a tempest, and still less in divining it before its precursory signs.

The positive circumstances of the facts leave no room for chance. Humboldt and Washington Irving,* the rationalistic writers and the contemners of the supernatural order,

*Irving pretends that if the guilty were punished, the innocent cacique Guarionex participated in their lot, and that thus the innocent and the guilty were confounded. We will first remark that, from the Catholic point of view, this objection is of no force; and next, that, in fact, Guarionex, obstinately deaf to the voice of the

have not dared to introduce Chance here, and risk an interpretation of this stubborn event that would be in accordance with their systems.

What discrimination was there not manifested by the tempest, in leaving to pursue her route the frailest of the caravels, charged with the revenues of the Admiral, and contenting itself with damaging the vessels of Rodrigo de Bastidas, while it inexorably submerged, after having shattered them, the solid and firm caravels of the fleet, which were charged with perverse men and homicidal riches! What nicety of tact in the hurricane, which respects the *Capitana*, that bears the pavilion of the messenger of the Cross, and does not "damage her the value of a straw," according to the expression of Columbus, leaves her at her moorings in the cove, while it pulls from their anchorage, drives and tosses in the high sea the other three caravels, and holds them in imminent danger, as if to show by this difference of fate the difference of their destination, and more fully reveal a protection altogether special.

And what are we to think of the calm weather which one would say had an understanding with the tempest, bringing back to Columbus the three caravels dispersed in the illimitable regions of space, as if to permit them to solemnize that day, in accordance with the pious custom of the Admiral?

Is this astonishing prevision the effect of Chance? In this case, at least, this Chance is so ingenious in its combinations, transcendent in its calculations, and so very far removed from the accidental and the unforeseen, that it can scarcely be recognized; and if it be really Chance, we must declare that it has much changed, and is no longer like itself.

The enemies of Columbus, struck with the immunity

Gospel, many times pardoned by the Admiral and the Adelantado, to whom he was ungrateful, besides his being an instigator of assassinations and an accomplice in revolts, cannot, even in the eyes of men, appear innocent.

which preserved his money and his caravels, and seeing how all at once he was revenged on his persecutors, attributed to his magical powers this terrible catastrophe.

When we call to mind the exalted piety of Columbus, and the crying wrongs that were done to him, our hearts, in accord with our reason, recognize here a great lesson given to the world. As the wisdom of the Creator is revealed by the marvels of His works, so the eternal government of Providence becomes visible to us in such an act. We ought not to forget the evangelical generosity of the counsel of Columbus. After the refusal rudely given by Ovando, the Admiral sent a second time to him, not hoping to bring him to better sentiments towards his own person, but to turn his enemies from the danger to which they exposed himself, and preserve the fleet from imminent destruction.

It seems as if God vouchsafed to send to these sinners this last warning, as a proof of their hardness of heart.

But these avaricious men, now loaded with riches, were impatient to return to their country. They longed to get to Castile, to enjoy the fruit of their rapine. Their past transgressions were, in advance, legitimized by gold; and they hoped to receive the favors with which the high credit of Fonseca would recompense their hatred of the Admiral. They rejected, with disdain, the counsel of the patriarch of the ocean, and responded with derision and contempt to this act of Christian magnanimity. After having loaded him with bitterness and calumnies when he governed them, they saw, with joy, his ships repulsed from the land he had discovered. The presence of the just man would have troubled their guilty illusions. Wishing to have nothing from him, not even a counsel, they rejected his warning. They said to the servant of God as the impious of ancient days said to the Lord Himself: "Depart from us."*

This act of divine justice, authenticated by official writings, political documents, and the testimony of the historians

* "Recede a nobis." — Job xxi : 14.

of the time, executed in the second year of the era of the revival of learning, the *renaissance*, during the advance of printing, the literary development of Spain, and the lucidity and progress of criticism, — appears to come to prove, and to render credible to the most obstinate infidels, the miracles of the Old Testament, demonstrates, indubitably, the intervention, sometimes palpable, of the Sovereign of heaven in the things of the earth, and gives credence to the temporal chastisements of peoples under the old law, as recorded in the Scriptures, attested by the highest traditions of the East, and the memory of which is preserved even by profane antiquity.

Neither in the days of the patriarchs, nor after the exodus from Egypt, nor under the judges or the kings, ever did a sign show itself more evident than that by which the wrath of God was that day manifested in the bosom of the Atlantic Ocean.

Still, the man in whose favor this divine judgment appeared to have been operated, never made any allusion to his rejected warning. At first, in continuing his voyage, he did not, perhaps, know the prodigy that had been operated, and in which he acted his part conformably to his character of messenger of salvation. But when, in two years after, he came to know the catastrophe in its details, he designated it by its true name, — a MIRACLE. In writing to the King, he stated that for a long time (perhaps some ages) our Lord God had not shown the world a miracle so signal.*

This catastrophe struck the cotemporary historians with awe, because of its enormousness. But, altogether miraculous as it was, it has, in our estimation, nothing more extraordinary than certain circumstances in the preceding voyages of Columbus.

The prediction of this tempest appears no more aston-

* “Grande tiempo ha que Dios Neustro Señor no mostro milagro tan publico.” — *Suplem. primer a la Coleccion Diplomat.*, num. cvi.

ishing than the announcement of land made to the day, and almost the hour, on the evening of the eleventh of October, 1492, when they were yet twenty-one leagues from any coast, and when the most practised eye could discover no new sign in the immensity of the ocean. And this fact ought not to appear more extraordinary than the assurance given to the crews, enraged by famine, and who wanted to destroy the Indians, that in three days* Cape St. Vincent would be seen. And this prescience is no more worthy of astonishment than the discovery of Trinidad, appearing to Columbus with even the sign of the name he had designed before quitting the port.

In the course of the voyage, the history of which we briefly epitomize, the extraordinary is so near the prodigious, and the prodigious so constantly attaches itself to Columbus, that we cannot avoid becoming familiar with it.

The laws of the general order of things are not interrupted for the advantage of Columbus. He cannot avoid neither dangers nor sufferings, but the manner in which he surmounts the most accumulated perils, and the confidence he shows in face of the most alarming extremities, cannot be explained without faith in invisible aids, and the assistance of supernatural power. We say then, with the sincerity of the most profound conviction, he who does not believe in the supernatural cannot comprehend Columbus.

SECTION IV.

The Admiral passed some days at Azua, to permit his crews to repose and refresh themselves, and to repair the injuries done his three caravels that had been separated from each other. The crews had no information whatever in regard to the fate that had befallen the fleet. Thence the little squadron went to the port of Yaquimo, to await calm weather.

* See *ante*, page 343.

The fourteenth of July, the sea becoming calm, the Admiral steered to the south. He was borne on by the currents until he found himself in the vicinity of some little islands near Jamaica, destitute of springs, but where the sailors obtained a supply of fresh water by digging holes in the sand on the beach. The calm continuing, he was swept away to the group of small islands on the south-east coast of Cuba, to which, in his second voyage, he had given the name of Queen's Gardens. Thence he resolutely continued his course to that part of *terra firma* where he considered the strait ought to be found.

He now held to the south-south-west. His voyage was soon impeded by a strange state of the atmosphere. The heavens became overcast, the sun clouded, and the stars invisible. Notwithstanding the force and the variation of the winds, he felt that the sea opposed to his progress a constant force, although irregular in its violence. They were drenched with frequent showers. Often some flaming lightnings seemed to set the horizon on fire; it required all the vigilance and energy of will of the Admiral to continue his course. His men became quite disheartened.

The ardent faith alone of Columbus enabled him to surmount these difficulties. Steadily occupied with the Holy Places, and with his thoughts fixed on the object of his aim, he did not wait to count the obstacles. His sixty-seventh year commenced weighing on him without his paying any attention to it. In spite of his rheumatic attacks, his stature, still straight and firm, sustained admirably the majesty of his physiognomy, upon which the nobleness of his thoughts seemed stamped. In proportion as he advanced in age he also advanced in Christian perfection. The sweetness of his looks, imbued with a loving tenderness, was expressive of something evangelical. His hair, of a lustrous gray, or rather white, encircled his temples with that crown of honor of which the Scriptures speak. With the amplitude of his Franciscan habit, and the dignity of his bearing, his whole person put one in mind of one of those images of a

patriarch or a prophet of which he has formed an idea from the Holy Scriptures. You would have said he was a shepherd-king, transported from Idumea or Mesopotamia into the vast plains of the Atlantic.

One was impressed with the sanctity as much as with the grandeur of this Admiral, whose mouth never hurt the feelings of anybody, or uttered a rude expression. He never, by his words, sent to the Devil neither man, nor rope, nor manœuvre, nor obstacle, nor weather, as is habitually done by mariners.

Always penetrated with the holiness of his object, the importance of attending to duty, and the merit of obedience, he failed not to apprise the disobedient of their sins, and threatened to abandon to the anger of God the person who persevered in doing evil, or who, through negligence, omitted doing his duty. God being the sole object of his actions, Columbus, when he ordered some new manœuvre or some new fatiguing labor, used to say, "We must do such or such a thing for God," and would try to inculcate into the minds of his men the obligations of duty, — a matter about which most of them would take but little trouble.

In leaving the port of Yaquimo he became dangerously ill, and several times "approached the gates of death." The sentiment of his responsibility and the object of his expedition surviving his loss of strength, he had a small cabin erected on the quarter-deck, and thence, from his bed, would give directions about the route, prosecuting his disproportionate contest with an overcast sky and an unknown sea.

At length they perceived, to the south, an island surrounded by several islets; it was Guanaja, situated in front of the Gulf of Honduras. The Admiral ordered it to be examined. The Adelantado immediately had two boats equipped, and landed with a strong detachment. He noticed that the island abounded with pine-trees, like those of the Antilles, and had traces of civilization, for he saw some

crucibles for smelting copper in, some fragments of which appeared to the sailors to be gold.

Meanwhile he beheld a kind of galley, eight feet broad and very long, formed from the trunk of a single tree. The cabin, in the form of a gondola, covered with palm-leaves artistically interlaced, and sufficiently close to exclude the rain, was filled with merchandise of various kinds, — pieces of cotton, chemisettes, copper hatchets, Mexican or wooden swords, earthen vessels, almonds, and cocoa-nuts. The Adelantado, without any opposition, tied this canoe between his two boats, and brought it to the *Capitana*. There were on board it some women clothed with cotton dresses, and twenty-five men, who wore broad cinctures around their loins. They testified no fear in seeing themselves in the power of the strangers. Columbus treated them with great kindness, but he uselessly employed his interpreters, and tried himself to obtain any certain information from them. He understood they were returning from Yucatan, a rich and cultivated country. He selected several of their articles of commerce, for which he gave them in exchange hawks' bells, with which they were highly delighted. He returned them to their canoe, but retained one of them, an old man who was named Giumbe, to serve as a dragoman or interpreter, and who appeared to him intelligent and expert in coasting navigation.

CHAPTER II.

Columbus Discovers *Terra Firma* near Cape Caxinas. — Atmospheric Contrarieties. — Sufferings of the Crews. — A Disaster. — The Island of Quiribi. — Search for a Strait at Chagres. — The Isthmus of Panama.

SECTION I.

FROM the island of Guanaja the Admiral directed his course to the south, in search of *terra firma*. He perceived it near a cape, which he named Caxinas, from its abounding with trees bearing a kind of apple with a spongy core, which the natives called *caxinas*. As soon as he doubled the cape, the tempest recommenced. At length, on the seventeenth of August, at a distance of fifteen leagues from the cape, they reached land on the bank of a river, and the Admiral took possession of it in the usual form, by the erection of a large Cross. In commemoration of this circumstance the river was called *Rio de la Posesion* (the River of Possession).

The squadron continued to sail in sight of land, notwithstanding the adverseness of the winds. By orders of the Admiral the little caravel, the *Biscayan*, went as near as possible to the shore, entering every gulf and creek of any size, for fear of missing the passage or strait by which Columbus hoped to enter into the seas of the Levant or the East Indies.

The sailors became exhausted with labor, and harassed with terror. Drenching rains, a boisterous sea, and contrary currents, gave them no respite since they had left the Queen's Gardens. Now and then they would land for some hours on certain coasts, in order to see the inhabit-

ants and observe the productions of these countries. They thus saw some tribes who spoke different dialects, but who understood but imperfectly the old Indian Giumbe, the interpreter. Some, tattooed on different parts of the body, exhibited on their members figures of leopards and of stags; others had cotton waistcoats and cuirasses. The chieftains had caps of white or colored cotton. Some wore tresses of hair in front. When arrayed for any festival, some smeared their faces in black, others in red; these traced lines on their foreheads; those painted black circles around their eyes. This whimsicalness in decorating themselves astonished young Fernando Columbus, and he wrote, thirty years afterwards, "They all believe that in these different states they are perfectly beautiful, whereas they are as frightful as the very devils."

In advancing to the east they saw tribes who lived on uncooked fish and on flesh meat. The ferociousness of their looks showed that of their manners. On seeing them, Giumbe said they were cannibals. Still farther eastwards they came across a tribe who had their ears bored and hideously distended, which caused that region to be called *Costa de la Oreja*, or the Coast of the Ear.

The sea became more adverse, and the wind increased in severity. The sailors became exhausted from incessant fatigues; the greater part of them became sick or unmanageable. The continual drenching rotted the sails, which tore into shreds. They lost anchors and tackles as well as boats, and the larger portion of their provisions. Each of the caravels leaked in several places; and such was the danger, that at each returning gust of the tempest the sailors thought themselves lost. The crew of the *Biscayian* had prepared for death, and received the last sacraments from Father Alexandre. In the other caravels the sailors, seeing themselves deprived of the succors of the Church, asked pardon of each other for their faults, and confessed their sins to one another. There was not a single one among them, large or small, that did not make some vow or

promise to make some pilgrimage. Among the domestics of the Admiral several engaged to embrace a monastic life if they should escape from this imminent peril.

These terrific scenes were repeated several times.

As regarded Columbus himself, what troubled him most was to see that he had exposed his young son to such perils, and to know that in the worst vessel of the squadron was his brother the Adelantado, who had not consented to accompany him but through submission to his desires. And often his thoughts recurred to his son Diego, whom he had left in Spain, and who might become an orphan, and perhaps be despoiled of his rights and honors. Happily, far from being borne down by his own sufferings, young Fernando was incessant in his attentions to him, and displayed a fortitude above his age. Columbus thus wrote of him: "Our Lord gave him so much courage, that it was he who put the others in heart. And when there was occasion for manœuvring, he did it as if he had been navigating for eighty years; and it was he who consoled me."

At length, after a struggle of sixty days to make a distance of seventy leagues, they arrived, on the fourteenth of September, at a cape where the coast, making an angle, turned directly to the south. As soon as they had doubled it, they had an easy wind and free navigation. The Admiral, in the name of the crews, solemnly thanked God for this sudden relief from their troubles; and, as a token of his gratitude, he gave the cape the name of *Gracios a Dios*, or "Thanks to God."

Here the Indian interpreter, Giumbe, who had his share in the sufferings, was dismissed with presents. He appeared to be much pleased with the munificence of the Admiral.

Continuing his course along the coast of Mosquito, being greatly in need of wood and water, the squadron anchored, on the sixteenth of September, near a large river, up which some boats were sent to procure the requisite supplies. As they were returning to the ships, a sudden swelling of the

sea rushing in, and encountering the rapid current of the river, caused a violent conflict, in which one of the boats was swallowed up, and all on board perished. This loss was keenly felt by the crews, and especially by the Admiral. In his affliction, he named this river *El Rio del Desastre* (the River of Disaster).

SECTION II.

On the twenty-fifth of September, Columbus came to an excellent landing between the little island of Quiribi and the main land, opposite an Indian village named *Cariari*, which presented a delightful aspect. It was situated on the bank of a beautiful river. The sailors preferred reposing themselves from the fatigues of the voyage to going on shore. The next day the Admiral ordered them not to leave the caravels. When the savages, who were prepared for battle, perceived that these strange beings were pacific, and made no movement to molest them, their hostility ceased, and their curiosity predominated. They approached the waters, making signals of peace, and showing the Spaniards cotton tunics, colored gowns, and weapons. The boldest of them swam to the ships, to propose exchanges.

Wishing to give them a high idea of the generosity and disinterestedness of the white men, Columbus forbade all traffic. He gave them presents of hawks' bells, which they prized very highly; but would take nothing in return. The people of *Cariari* made signs to the Spaniards to come ashore; but, seeing that invitations and entreaties were useless, they held counsel among themselves; and, either because their pride was wounded at the refusal of their proffered gifts, or because they saw in it a mistrust of their intentions, they resolved, in their turn, to receive no presents from these strangers. Accordingly they left them lying in a heap on the strand, where the Spaniards found them on a subsequent day.

In order to oblige these mysterious strangers to come on

shore, and wishing, at first, to gain their confidence, the people of Cariari deputed an old man, bearing a kind of flag of peace at the end of a staff, and leading two young girls, decorated with all their finery, to be presented to the Admiral. The oldest of them was only eleven years old. They were secretly provided with magic powders. He placed them in a boat which was returning from Aiguade, and requested the sailors to take them to the caravels. The Admiral gave them clothes and hawks' bells, had them served with eatables, and in the evening sent them back on shore; but, as the strand was completely deserted, the boat had to bring them back on board. The Admiral took measures for their safety and repose. In the morning he again sent them on shore; but, some hours after, when the boats returned to the landing-place, the two young girls came and returned everything they had received as presents.

The next day, as the Adelantado approached the shore, two of the principal inhabitants, entering the water, took him out of the boat in their arms, and, carrying him to land, seated him, with great ceremony, on a grassy bank. The Adelantado made several inquiries of them, to which they answered with great kindness. Fearing that he could not recollect everything they told him, he ordered the notary to write down their replies. When the Indians saw the latter trace some black characters, they suspected it was some magical artifice. Seized with terror, they fled precipitately, and thought they were counteracting the baleful spell, in casting over their heads, and towards the Spaniards, some secret powder, which the wind wafted towards the latter.

The squadron, on the fifth of October, departed from Cariari, and sailed along what is at present called *Costa Rica* (the Rich Coast), from the gold and silver mines in after years found among its mountains. On their route they stopped at a couple of places, where the Indians gave the Admiral several mirrors, and some ornaments of pure

gold. At length they passed before Cobrava, and perceived five Indian villages near rivers. Here they got new information about gold. It was known that the natives made their mirrors from gold obtained from Veragua, and that the latter place was not far distant. The Indian interpreters assured the Admiral that the gold regions ended there.

SECTION III.

Any other man, loving riches, and knowing that the possession of gold mines would conciliate the favor of the Court, and stop the mouths of his enemies, would have no more urgent desire than to view this country abounding in gold, take solemn possession of it, go back to Spain, and return with forces sufficient for its occupation. But Columbus, now wholly taken up with finding a strait, would not stop for the mines, which he considered as already secured to the Crown; so he departed, amid drenching rains, to continue his voyage in quest of the wished-for strait.

He soon found himself precisely at the spot where, from the vaults of the Alhambra, he had concluded there must be a passage that would enable him to carry the standard of Salvation to the sea of the South. He had the *Biscayian* to examine the smallest recesses in the shore. They were then on the coast of Chagres. He even sought the strait at what is at present called *Panama*. He searched for it where a particular configuration seems to have prepared for the severance of the two great parts of the American continent. One would say that nature was suddenly arrested in her work by the Most High, who, no doubt, reserves for the genius of man the opening of this grand passage. Columbus came to designate its locality.

CHAPTER III,

Columbus has a terrible Struggle with the Elements. — Globular Lightnings. — A frightful Water-Spout. — Columbus, almost dying, is roused by the Cries of the Sailors; he invokes his Divine Master, and conjures the Water-Spout. — He forms a Settlement on the Rio Belen. — The Indian Chief prepares to destroy the Spaniards. — The Adelantado captures the Chief in the midst of his People.

SECTION I.

THE stormy winds continued to howl. During four months, save some rare intervals, unpropitious winds and drenching rains, in addition to the constant opposition of the currents, exhausted the strength of the men, and disheartened them. The captains and other officers, as well as the sailors, begged for an immediate return to Castile. The Admiral, whose resolution was never shaken by obstacles, at any rate began now to have some doubts with regard to the exact position of the strait. He considered that perhaps, notwithstanding the grave reasons for his conjecture, the passage he sought for may be placed much farther south, towards those lands which he thought must exist in the southern portion of the globe. So, reflecting on the state of his *personnel*, of his damaged munitions, and of his crazed and worm-eaten ships, he resolved to turn back and visit the gold mines of Veragua, about which he had heard such wonderful reports.

On the fifth of December he left the port of El Retrete, and, directing his course towards Veragua, came to Puerto Bello. The next day he pursued his route, but was obliged, by the winds, to return to Puerto Bello to await a calm.

But as he was about to enter the port a violent squall drove him to the main sea. The waves became so high, and the successions so great, that there was no longer any directing of the vessels. The Admiral fell sick again; one of his old wounds reopened, and during nine days all hope was lost of his recovery. Contrary squalls, continually changing, prevented the caravels from either entering a harbor or reaching the high sea.

But they had yet to encounter a tempest in all its fury. The four caravels, become the sport of the waves, were pushed sometimes to their summits, which rose as high as mountains, and sometimes were precipitated into the yawning abysses at their bases. Globular lightnings, whose blazings lasted several seconds, followed each other uninterruptedly; and such was their terrific fury, that, notwithstanding his sickness, the Admiral would every moment rise in his bed to see if the masts and riggings were not swept away.

In the midst of this "elemental strife" the rain fell in drenching showers, which extinguished the lightnings, but soon came in torrents. It continued thus for eight days. The crews became so harassed that they wished for death in order to be delivered from so many evils. It appears it was at this time that Father Alexandre, worn out with continual anguish, succumbed to the consequences of his sufferings. Thus the first chaplain that first died on the ocean from the fatigues of the apostolate, was a Franciscan. The glorious first-fruits of such a death seemed justly due to the Seraphic Order.

But the greatest danger was yet to come. A new trial awaited these unhappy people.

On the fifteenth of December, while the Admiral was still in bed and apparently in his agony, harrowing shrieks came from one of the caravels, which were immediately repeated from the others. These cries of despair resounded in the very soul of the dying man. He shuddered, and opened his eyes.

Something frightful was going on in sight.

At a certain point agitated by a vibratory movement, the sea, swelling with all the waves which it attracted to this centre, arose as a single mountain, while dark clouds descending in the form of a reversed cone stretched themselves down to the marine whirl, which arose tremulously at its approach, as if to join it. These two huge forms of cloud and sea suddenly met and embraced each other in the form of a whirling X. "It was," says the historian of San Domingo, "one of those water-spouts which seamen call *fronks*, which were then so little known, and which have since submerged so many vessels."* A sharp, hissing noise preceded the fatal whiff of this frightful form, then without a name in our language. This kind of water-spout is the most frightful manifestation of that hellish tempest which in the Orient receives the very name of the spirit of evil, — *Typhon*. Woe to the ships that encounter it in its passage!

At the cries of distress which reached his heart, the great man became suddenly reanimated. In face of the impending ruin he rises, with his wonted vigor, in order to survey and weigh the peril. *He*, also, perceives the formidable thing that is approaching. The sea appeared to be sucked up towards the heavens. For this unknown phenomenon he saw no remedy: art was useless, and navigation powerless; besides, there was no steering any longer.

Immediately Columbus, the adorer of the Word, suspected, in this terrific display of the brute forces of nature, some satanic manœuvre. He could not exorcise the powers of the air, according to the rites of the Church, fearing to usurp the authority of the priesthood; but he called to mind that he was the chief of a Christian expedition, and that his object was a holy one, and he desired, in his way, to compel the spirit of darkness to yield the passage to him. He had blessed wax candles immediately lighted and put in the lanterns; then he girded himself with his sword over the cord

* P. Charlevoix, *Histoire de Saint Domingue*, liv. iv., p. 241.

of St. Francis, and, taking the book of the Gospels, standing in face of the water-spout which was coming near, accosted it with the sublime declaration which commences the Gospel of the well-beloved disciple of Jesus, St. John, the adoptive son of the Blessed Virgin.

Trying to raise his voice above the howling of the tempest, the Messenger of Salvation declared to Typhon "that in the beginning was the Word; that the Word was with God, and that the Word was God. That all things have been made by Him, and that without Him was made nothing that was made; that in Him was life, and that the life was the light of men; that the light shineth in darkness, and that the darkness did not comprehend it; that the world was made by Him, and that the world knew Him not; that He came to His own, and that His own received Him not; but that He has given to those who believe in His name, and who are not born of the flesh, or of blood, or of the will of man, the power to become the children of God; and that the WORD WAS MADE FLESH, and that He dwelt among us."

Then, in the name of the divine Word, Jesus Christ, whose words calmed the winds and appeased the billows, Christopher Columbus commands the water-spout to spare those who, becoming children of God, go to carry the Cross to the extremities of the earth, and navigate in the name of the Thrice-Holy Trinity. Then drawing his sword, with a full and ardent faith he traces in the air with the steel the sign of the Cross, and describes a circle around him with the sword, as if he had really severed or intercepted the water-spout.* And, in fact, oh prodigy! the water-spout, which was coming straight towards the car-

* Hence the idea first spread among sailors, that one would protect himself from the water-spout by cutting it with a sabre and reciting the Gospel of St. John. In his translation of the Life of Columbus, Cotelendy recalls this belief. He says, in a marginal note, in speaking of the water-spout, "A person is safe from it by cutting it with a knife, and the Gospel of St. John."—*La Vie de Christophe Colomb*. In 12mo, chez Claude Barbin, 1681.

avels, appearing to be pushed obliquely, passed between the half-submerged caravels, and went off bellowing to lose itself in the immensity of the Atlantic.*

This sudden retreat of a destructive phenomenon appeared to Columbus himself as a new favor from the Divine Majesty. † “The same piety which prompted him to have recourse to God to be preserved, prevented him from having any doubt that he was indebted to Him for his preservation in this extremity.” ‡

Having nothing to object to the authority of the fact, the Protestant Irving, to weaken the effect of this miraculous event, attributes to a collective proceeding the work of the individual inspiration of Columbus. He says: “At the sight of the water-spout, which advanced on them, the despairing seamen, seeing that no human effort could avert the danger, set about reading passages from St. John the Evangelist. The water-spout passed between the vessels without doing them any injury, and the trembling sailors attributed their safety to the miraculous efficacy of the words of the Scriptures.” §

It is in vain for Irving to try to hide under the plural form the spontaneous initiative of Columbus, and to keep out of sight his individual action. The event itself, intrinsically, protests against such a disfigurement of history, and opposes to it both moral and physical impossibilities. How could the caravels, separated from each other by the terrible commotion of the elements, scarcely able to see each other across the watery vapors and the globules of foam filling the air, and still less hear each other, — how could they, we say, settle on a plan of combating the water-spout, agree about the choice of an Evangelist, and fix on

* Fernando Colombo; *Vita dell' Amariglio*, cap. xciv. Las Casas; *Historia de las Indias*, lib. II., cap. xxiv.

† Herrera. *Hist. Gen. des Voyages*, etc., Dec. I., liv. v., cap. ix.

‡ P. Charlevoix. *Hist. de S. Domingue*, liv. iv., p. 242.

§ Washington Irving. *Hist. of Christopher Columbus*, Book XV., chap. vi.

the passages deemed proper for warding off the peril? In the rapidity of its march, did the frightful water-spout leave time for deliberation? Of whom, and how, take counsel? Not to mention other reasons, Irving does not seem to have considered that none of the pilots would of himself have conceived an expedient so singularly foreign to nautical science, and at the same time so bold in a spiritual point of view. At most, all they would have ventured on would be some prayers of the Liturgy destined for the warding off of storms. To recur to the words of the well-beloved disciple, and choose his sublime declaration, it was necessary that one should himself be advanced in the splendors of divine knowledge, find himself at the height of this superhuman intuition, merit the divine protection, be agreeable in the eyes of God, — in a word, be Christopher Columbus. Every Catholic soul will think as we do, and no judicious mind will believe in the truly inadmissible plural of Irving.

SECTION II.

As soon as the water-spout disappeared, the fury of the sea abated, and little by little there came a calm.

The sailors, the greater part of whom were sick, remained debilitated, dejected, and unable to attend to the least manœuvre. In considering their labors, their fatigues, and their hardships, which no constitution could withstand, Herrera regards this calm as an act of the Divine mercy. He says, positively, that God accorded it to them to preserve their lives.*

On the sixth of January, 1503, the squadron entered a river, which the Admiral, in honor of the feast of the day, named *Bethlehem*, or, by contraction, *Belen*. It was only a league from that of Veragua, the country of the gold mines. From Puerto Bello to Veragua the distance is about thirty leagues. To traverse it required the labors and the sufferings of nearly

* Herrera. *Hist. Gen. des Voyages*, etc., Dec. I., liv. v., chap. ix.

a month. To commemorate these unheard-of traverses, the Admiral named this portion of the coast *Costa de los Contrastes*.

On the banks of the Belen was an Indian village, the inhabitants of which rose to arms at the sight of the foreigners. On their becoming cooled down, information, though with difficulty, was obtained from them in relation to the situation of the gold mines. The next day an armed boat was sent to the river of Veragua. The inhabitants made a show of opposing the landing; but Diego Mendez, who knew a little of their dialect, gave them to understand that they came with the sole object of trading. They then became quite civil, and bartered twenty gold mirrors for some European trinkets.

The twelfth of January the Adelantado, with some boats, ascended the Veragua, to the residence of the chief of the country, who had the title of *Quibian*. Apprised of the intended visit, he came to meet the Adelantado. The interview between them was quite friendly. The chief gave them the gold ornaments he had about him, and received in return some gifts which he considered of great value. They left each other mutually well pleased. The next day curiosity led the chief to Belen. The Admiral gave him a grand reception, and showed him through the caravels. The Quibian conversed with him by signs. The attendants of the chief exchanged some gold mirrors for hawks' bells. Suddenly some suspicion crossed his mind, and he went away abruptly.

The twenty-fourth of January, while a bellowing storm convulsed the ocean, the river, without any visible cause, suddenly swelled, and with such violence, that the tacklings broke as if they were threads. The caravels were driven against each other. The Admiral saw the danger was extreme. His caravels were on the point of being borne away. "Certainly," he says, "I never saw them in more imminent danger;" and he artlessly adds, with a touching modesty, "Our Lord brought a remedy, as He has always

done." Whence came this sudden inundation? The Admiral attributed it, not to continual rains, that would have led to a gradual swelling of the river, but to a sudden cause, — to a tremendous storm raging in the interior of the country, on that chain of high mountains running from north to west, to which he gave the name of *St. Christopher*. Experience has since verified the admirable accuracy of his conjecture.

Notwithstanding the continued rains, the Adelantado, at the head of seventy men, made a trip into the interior of the country, and came before the residence of the chief. The latter, with gracious airs, came, becomingly escorted, to meet him. The next day the Adelantado, conducted by three guides, whom the cunning chief gave him, had to ford a river forty-three times, in order to make a distance of four leagues. The next day they found some mineral gold on the surface of the soil. The guides, having conducted the Adelantado to the top of a very high mountain, showed him lands which extended beyond sight, and assured him that in that whole region, and for twenty days' journey beyond, there existed gold mines. They named with confidence the places where it would be found more or less abundant.

As the state of his equipage no longer permitted Columbus to continue, during this expedition, his search for the strait, he resolved to establish at this point a military post, which would also be a factory for trading in gold, while he himself would return to Castile, to procure reinforcements and munitions. He made several presents to the chief, in order that he may not be offended at the settlement made on his lands. The site which the Admiral chose was somewhat elevated, and near the mouth of the river. On this site he erected a fortress, and assigned it eighty men, under the command of the Adelantado. He left them one of the caravels, the *Galician*, for their use. But to the drenching rains and inundations there had already succeeded a drought. The river had become considerably lower; the

sand had formed an impassable bar at the mouth of the river, and there were only three feet of water. There was nothing to be done but to have patience. Columbus waited until those rains, so much cursed by his sailors, but now so ardently desired, should come to deliver him from this blockade.

SECTION III.

Meanwhile, the chief, seeing that a settlement was formed on his territory, resolved to attack these strangers unawares, and to burn their ships. Dissimulating his intentions, he pretended to be collecting his troops to fight against the cacique of Cobrava Aurira, with whom he lately had a skirmish, in which he was wounded in the thigh. While he made his preparations beneath the eyes of the Spaniards, without there being any suspicion of him, a man on board the *St. James* attentively observed his doings and those of his men.

Diego Mendez, the man alluded to, came to the Admiral and said to him: "Señor, these people, who have been making preparations for war, say they are going to join those of Veragua, in order to march against the Indians of Cobrava Aurira. I am confident, on the contrary, that the preparation is for burning our ships, and massacring all of us." The Admiral charged Mendez to watch the Indians closely. Without losing a moment, the latter concluded to arm a boat, and sail along the coast of Veragua, to reconnoitre the enemy's camp. He had not made half a league when he found assembled more than a thousand warriors, well provided with provisions and liquors. Bringing the boat to, he dared to jump on the beach, and go alone into the midst of them. He offered to accompany them to the war with his boat. This they refused, saying it would be useless. He reëntered his craft, and remained the whole night watching them. That very night they had fixed on to execute their project. Seeing they were discovered, they

returned to Veragua, while the intrepid Mendez came back to the Admiral, to make his report. "I recounted," he says, "to his Excellency what had passed, and he appreciated it exceedingly."

Encouraged by this first success, and by the thanks of the Admiral, the brave Mendez offered to go and spy them in their camp. Still, as he meditated a stratagem, he needed a companion, and he found one. Rodrigo de Escobar wished to be the man. In their route Mendez encountered two canoes with strange Indians, and learned from them that the project, disconcerted by his presence, would be executed in less than two days. He gave them some toys, and besought them to take him to Veragua. At length they consented, and landed him in sight of the Indian villages.

When he returned and made his report, the arrest of the chief and his officers was decided on. The execution of it was assigned by the Admiral to the Adelantado. Don Bartholomew took with him eighty men, who followed him two by two, to some distance from the residence of the chief. Then he advanced with five men to the fortress of the chieftain, seized on him, and fired a shot from an arquebuse,—the signal for the Spaniards who were lying in ambush. Forthwith the officers and relations of the chief, to the number of fifty, mute with astonishment, were seized and bound with strong cords along with himself.

The vassals of the cacique sent forth shrieks of woe, and supplicated the Adelantado to restore him to liberty, offering, for his ransom, a treasure which they said was buried in the neighboring forest. But the Adelantado would wait for nothing, knowing that the assembling of the tribe would be attended with sanguinary results.

The cunning chief, however, soon made his escape, through the carelessness of the officer who got charge of him.

The copious rains that now fell permitted the three caravels to pass the mouth of the river. The Admiral

desiring, before he returned to Spain, to go to Hispaniola, to send thence to the new fortress reinforcements and provisions, cast anchor about a league from the mouth, so as to avail himself of the first favorable wind. But the cacique was not asleep during this time.

CHAPTER IV.

The Natives attack the Spanish Camp. — The Crew of a Long-boat is Massacred. — The Admiral cannot go to their Relief on account of the extreme Roughness of the Sea. — His extreme Sadness. — He has a Miraculous Vision. — Departure for Hispaniola and forced Landing at Queen's Gardens. — Arrival in Jamaica, where the Vessels are stranded in the Bay of Santa Gloria.

SECTION I.

ON the sixth of April, as the Admiral was preparing for his departure, sixty men from the garrison came in their long-boat to the anchorage to bid their comrades farewell. The twenty men who remained with the Adelantado were scattered here and there; some on the bank of the river and some with Diego Mendez.

The cacique, taking advantage of this temporary diminution of the garrison, immediately, with his forces, surrounded the camp. They numbered more than four hundred men. Happily their terrific war-cries gave the Spaniards time to arm themselves. Soon the Indians were repulsed, leaving nineteen of their number dead, and fifty prisoners of war. The Spaniards had seven wounded, some mortally. The brave Adelantado received a slight wound on the breast. The Indians fled to the woods.

After the battle was over, the long-boat of the *Capitana*, commanded by Diego Tristan, which had been sent for a supply of fresh water, came to the scene of action. Her force consisted of but eleven men, three only of whom were armed. Contrary to the remonstrances of Diego Mendez, who was well acquainted with the character of the Indians,

Tristan would ascend the river. The consequence was that when he got to the place that afforded fresh water, his boat was surrounded by the Indians in their canoes, and all on board, except one, were massacred. The one who escaped did so by swimming under water to the opposite shore. He returned to the camp and related the sad event.

In the evening the long-boat of the *Galician* returned with the men who had gone to bid good-by to their friends. The next morning they tried, with a boat, to get to the Admiral, to beg him to come to their assistance and take them away ; but the roughness of the sea prevented their passing the mouth of the river. Elated with their triumph over the crew of the long-boat, the Indians continued to harass the camp, but the Adelantado was there.

SECTION II.

The Admiral felt great anguish of mind. For ten days he awaited the return of the long-boat, and still there was no appearance of her. Having a presentiment that some misfortune had occurred, he sent several times a boat well-armed in quest of her, and to try to bring some news from the camp, but always the surf at the *embouchure* of the river prevented its going any farther.

Hitherto, though he was without news from the long-boat or the fortress, he was in hopes the Indians would not attack the factory, on account of the fifty prisoners detained as hostages on board the *St. James*. Every evening they were shut up in the forecastle of the caravel, the hatchway of which was secured by a strong chain and padlock ; and, for additional security, some of the sailors slept on the hatch, which was so high as to be considered out of reach of the prisoners. One night they neglected to fasten the chain. The Indians, noticing this negligence, collected, noiselessly, a number of stones from the ballast of the vessel, and made a heap of them under the hatchway. Several of the most powerful warriors mounted on

the top, and, bending their backs, by a simultaneous effort forced up the hatch, flinging the sailors who slept on it to the opposite side of the vessel. In an instant the greater part of the Indians sprang up, plunged into the sea, and swam ashore. Several, however, were prevented from sallying forth, others were seized on the deck, and forced back into the forecastle; and this time the officers themselves secured the chains. In the morning, when they went to give their rations to the prisoners, they found them all dead. The latter had, in their despair, strangled themselves.

The escape of the prisoners increased the anxiety of the Admiral, and the suicide of so many persons added to the horrors of the situation. It was feared that the escaped Indians would attack the Spanish camp.

A first-class sailor of the *Biscayan*, Pedro de Ledesma, offered to go ashore if the Admiral would have him sent to the beginning of the breakers, where the boat should wait until his return. He bravely attained the shore, and reached the camp unexpectedly, where he was received with delirious joy as a liberator.

Ledesma returned to the Admiral with a verbal message from the Adelantado. Across the surges and breakers he reached the boat and was conducted to the Admiral, who, in recompense for his exemplary courage, immediately raised him to the rank of an officer.

SECTION III.

The report of Ledesma filled the heart of Columbus with grief and alarm. His men on land were exposed to impending danger, without his being able to assist them. He felt for his brother, who had under his orders a troop thinned by death and ready to revolt, and who were surrounded by a multitude of furious savages. His leaky ships could not withstand a new assault from the tempest. The crews had yielded to their fearful apprehensions. As regarded himself, to his paroxysms of pain were added a

violent fever. The sea and the heavens persisted in their inclemency. He saw only anguish and gloom among his sailors. Even the captains were shedding tears of woe.

In the midst of this gloomy desolation, Columbus made an effort to get to the round-top (*hune*) of the mainmast, to see if he could perceive any encouraging signs. Seeing none, he sank down at the foot of the round-top, as formerly the prophet sank at the foot of the juniper-tree in the desert, who, with a desolate heart, asked of God to be taken from this world. Still Columbus did not murmur, or express any wish. His dejection was too great to be spent in words. He sighed inwardly and fell asleep. Affliction had beset his soul, when he heard a "tender voice," the words of which we endeavor to translate with scrupulous fidelity. This voice said to him, —

"Oh, thou fool! slow to believe and to serve thy God, the God of all! What more did He for Moses, or for His servant David, than He has done for thee? From thy birth He has taken the greatest care of thee. When He saw thee come to a fitting age, He marvellously made thy name resound throughout the earth. The Indies, those wealthy regions of the world, He gave thee for thine own, and empowered thee to dispose of them according to thy pleasure. He delivered thee the keys of the barriers of the Ocean Sea, which was shut up with such mighty chains. Thy orders were obeyed in many countries, and among Christians thou didst acquire honorable fame. What more did He for the people of Israel when He led them forth from Egypt? Or even for David, whom, from being a shepherd, He made King of Judea? Turn then to Him, and acknowledge thy error; His mercy is infinite. Thy age shall be no impediment to any great undertaking. He has many and vast inheritances yet in reserve. Abraham was above a hundred years when he begat Isaac; and was Sarai youthful? Thou urgest for succor despondingly. Answer! who hath afflicted thee so much and so many times, — God, or the world? The privileges and

promises which God hath made to thee, He hath never broken; neither hath He said, after having received the services, that His meaning was different, and was to be understood in a different sense: nor doth He inflict pain in order to show forth His power. He performs to the very letter. He fulfils all that He promises, and with increase. Is not this His custom? I have shown thee what thy Creator hath done for thee, and what He doeth for all. The present is the reward of the toils and perils thou hast endured in serving others."

"In hearing this," adds Columbus, "I was as one almost dead, and had no power to reply to words so true; I could only bewail my errors. Whoever it was that spoke to me, finished by saying: 'Fear not! Have confidence. All these tribulations are graven in marble, and it is not without cause.'"

In transcribing these words, repeated by Columbus himself with his charming artlessness, we are seized with an indefinable feeling of respect.

Yet, while recognizing the elevation and poetry of these inimitable lines, the Protestant school tries to see in them only an ingenious fiction, or the product of a fevered delirium. It suspects the truth of the vision, and reduces the recital of the Admiral to an ably concocted scheme to give an indirect lesson to King Ferdinand.

Our pen will not descend to discussing this odious imputation. A single fact will suffice to refute it.

In the letter in which Columbus reports this vision, he takes no occasion to remind the Sovereigns of the outrageous and unjust manner in which he was deprived of his government, to reclaim his reëstablishment in his dignities and powers, or to demand, as an act of justice, the chastisement of his enemies.

All that he says is very plain and direct, and it seems to us that it contains no adroit allusion or circuitous hint. In

* *Cuarto y ultimo viage de Colon.*

truth, craftiness, or resorting to tortuous ways, formed no part of the character of Columbus.

Who can doubt of the reality of this vision but those who really deny the supernatural order, and the divine action on humanity? Poor blind creatures, deprived of interior light, and deficient in the sense of religion, which is the very essence of human reason! Whoever admits divine revelation believes in the apparitions with which the patriarchs were favored, in the inspiration of the prophets, in the invisible strengthening of the martyrs, and in the prodigies operated by the saints; and cannot yield up to doubt the vision related by Columbus. Such language can be repeated, but it could not be fabricated.

What Columbus mentions passed during his sleep. It was not even precisely a vision like that of the father of believers, or of Israel, the father of the twelve tribes; nor, still yet, a wind like that which blew on the prophet in his desolation. It was a voice. Columbus does not relate what he felt, or what he saw, but simply what he heard. *Fides ex auditu*, — “Faith cometh by hearing.”

Whence came this voice, and who uttered it? The servant of God does not say; — influenced, no doubt, by his Christian modesty. He mentions the fact only, with a discretion replete with respectful gratitude; and, without designating the quality of the compassionate being who consoled him, he limits himself to saying: “Whoever it was that spoke to me.” But already the words that precede these have, without his being aware of it, stamped this disclosure with the seal of Christian veracity.

Every adept in psychological studies will recognize here the experimental force of the true, and will find in the words of Columbus the criterion of truthfulness.

To return to our narrative. After awaking from his sleep, Columbus felt much comforted and strengthened. The weather, however, still continued inclement. For nine days more his constancy was further put to the proof. At length the sea became calmer, and, by the

extraordinary exertions of Diego Mendez, everything was brought away from the *Galician* to the three other caravels.

SECTION IV.

Towards the end of April the Admiral gave, in the name of the Blessed Trinity, the order for sailing. The three caravels opened their sails, and took their course for Hispaniola, where it was necessary to go without delay to repair the ships and procure provisions. The continuation of bad weather, and the incredible number of tempests they had to encounter, in exhausting the physical strength of the sailors, terrified their imaginations. The pilots no longer found any explanations for the atmospheric rigors that presented themselves. The crews were persuaded that the numerous magicians on the coast had plied the resources of their black art to keep the ships away from land, and cause them to perish. Columbus felt convinced that the furiousness of the elements, conjured against his caravels, was a last effort of the Enemy of Salvation to oppose the accomplishment of his object.

It cannot be denied that this voyage, undertaken in order to open a passage for the Cross over the immensity of the ocean, and to bring it back to Europe, by the circumnavigation of the globe, encountered from the winds, the waves, and watery and fiery meteors, an opposition as violent as it was exceptional; and that the perseverance, the struggle of Columbus, was one of the greatest examples of constancy against forces which so terribly surpassed human resources. This hostility of the elements made a deep impression on the mind of young Fernando Columbus, though he showed great courage, in order not to add to the anguish of his father. Later, after having several times traversed the Atlantic, when he wrote his history, an experience of thirty years having modified his cosmographic ideas, what he had seen, what he had suffered during this expedition, seemed to him impossible. He distrusted his

own recollections, fearing the exaggerations of a youthful imagination; and, to control the fidelity of his memory, consulted the Narration of an officer with whom he had voyaged, the trusty Diego Mendez.* He there found his recollections justified.

These contrarieties of the elements seemed really combined in order to constrain Columbus to keep out to the sea, and always away from the new land. Herrera says: "As they left one port, it seemed as if the winds spied their departure, in order to use afterwards all their force on the vessels, as against rocks, that could have resisted them; and thus, by the force of the winds, they were pushed, now to the east, immediately after to the west, and thus in so many ways and so often, that the Admiral, and all those who were with him, did not know what to decide on.† It is a fact, that since then no maritime exploration on the rest of the globe, no posterior voyage in these regions, was tried in this cruel manner.

The caravels, pierced with holes, leaked; the provisions were injured, and the same as lost. Still Columbus, not being able to resign himself to the idea that the strait did not exist in these regions, wished to continue his search for it; and, notwithstanding the contrary advice of the pilots and the fears of the sailors, he bore to the east, in place of the north. As the officers had contests in regard to the route followed, and the one to be pursued, which each of them estimated according to the chart he had drawn up, Columbus, with that superiority of command which everybody recognized in him, seized on the charts, and imposed silence on all. After having made thirty leagues, the leaking of the *Biscayan* was so great, that it became necessary to abandon her. Her equipage was divided between the two remaining ships. The Admiral did not the less con-

* Fernando Colombo. *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, cap. xciv.

† Herrera. *Hist. Gen. et Voy. et Conq. des Castiliens dans les Ind. Occid.*, Dec. I, liv. v., chap. ix.

tinue his route. He passed Port Retrète, and a number of islands, which he called *Las Barbas*, and which belonged to the cacique Pocorosa. He approached land anew, and advanced ten leagues to the west.

Accustomed to the favors of Providence, which he had so many times experienced, the Admiral continued his exploration, with his ships riddled and almost destitute of provisions. The first of May the pilots, justly frightened at the state of things, represented to him the condition of the caravels, and the dejected state of the sailors, enfeebled by privations and fatigues. Columbus then gave orders to steer directly north. For two days they had a favorable wind. His officers feared they were carried to the east of the Caribbean archipelago, while the Admiral feared they were driven to the west of Cape St. Michael. The latter opinion was afterwards found to be the correct one.

The second of May he came to two islands, which, from the number of tortoises seen on them, he called, from their name, *Tortugas*. The currents and contrary winds now drove him anew to the Queen's Gardens, although he had endeavored to keep wide of them. His sea-stores were all gone, except a little biscuit, oil, and vinegar; and the water entered at all parts, requiring the pumps to be incessantly worked.

In this sad situation they were assailed by a tempest. In a few hours they lost successively three anchors. At midnight the cable of the *St. James* snapped, and the caravel was driven with such violence upon the *Capitana*, that both were much injured. "It was a marvel that both did not go to pieces." The sea remained boisterous for ten days. At length they got to Macaco, on the coast of Cuba, where they rested themselves, and procured some provisions. Making sail again, he endeavored to beat up for Hispaniola; but the adverse force of the currents and of the winds made his efforts of but little avail.

The tempest recommenced. The *St. James* was obliged to run into a port. The *Capitana* wished to

keep the sea in spite of the storm. In the night the water gained so much on her, that she was on the point of foundering. "Their force and industry could not overcome the water, although they labored incessantly at the pumps. Already the water had risen to the deck."* Columbus himself says: "My vessel was on the very point of sinking when our Lord conducted me miraculously to land."

The twenty-third of June the *Capitana*, followed by the *St. James*, was pushed on the north coast of Jamaica, into a port well sheltered, but met with none of the natives, from whom they could obtain provisions, nor was there any fresh water to be had. The next day, with inexpressible pains and perils, they sailed along the coast, seeking a harbor more to the east. The Admiral recognized, towards the middle of the northern part of the island, the beautiful harbor which he had perceived at the time of his discovery of Jamaica, and which he had named *Santa Gloria* (Holy Glory), because the harmonies of the works of the Creative Word were there displayed with inexpressible magnificence, and because his religious soul enjoyed in their contemplation a felicity the ravishing delights of which appeared to him to be, as it were, a shadow of those of the elect.

This hospitable island was densely populated, and abounded with all the necessities of life. Columbus was not the only person who recognized in their coming here a particular favor from God. His flag-officer, the brave Diego Mendez, considered this event as an act of the Divine mercy.

The two caravels, reduced to mere wrecks, were ready to sink even in the port. Columbus, therefore, ordered them to be run aground, and fastened together side by side. He then had thatched cabins erected at their prows and sterns; and, to prevent all altercations with the natives, nobody was allowed to go ashore without especial

*Herrera. *Hist. Gen. des Voyages*, etc., Dec. I., liv. vi., chap II.

license. Their provisions were all consumed, and famine stared them in the face; but, through the indefatigable and devoted exertions of Diego Mendez, a supply was obtained from the caciques. For this favor Mendez himself says the Admiral "thanked God for having brought me safe and sound from the midst of these savage nations." *

** Relacion hecha por Diego Mendez de Algunas a Contecimientos del ultimo Viage del Almirante Cristobal Colon.*

41*

CHAPTER V.

Columbus writes a Letter to the Sovereigns, which he cannot send but by a Miracle. — Diego Mendez undertakes to be the Bearer. — Mendez is marvellously aided by Providence, and finally arrives in Hispaniola in a Canoe. — This Voyage a truly miraculous one. — Revolt of the Brothers Porras against the Admiral.

SECTION I.

NEITHER the abundance of provisions, nor the friendly disposition of the natives, could deceive the foresight of the Admiral. He knew the fickleness of the savages, and their innate dissimulation. These people, now so ready to assist, may to-morrow become enemies. Twice he had already experienced their warlike propensity. They possessed flotillas of canoes that were not to be despised. It would be easy to starve out the new-comers, or burn them with their thatched cabins. The sailors, broken down by the prodigious hardships they had undergone, were deprived of all energy. The caravels could not be put to sea again, and no others could be built, all the master-carpenters having perished in the disaster of the sixth of April.

Columbus found himself thus shipwrecked without a tempest, being neither on land nor on sea, exposed to possible danger from the shore, and deprived of the resources of the sea, — a disheartening position, because there was no outlet from it! How was he to obtain aid? How make known to the Queen his discovery of the gold mines of Veragua, and the existence of an unexplored sea on the other side of the new continent? The Admiral no longer had a boat of

any kind that could attempt to make a voyage from Jamaica to Hispaniola, — a distance of forty leagues, — over a fickle sea, and against the currents and east winds, which often require the struggle of a month from a well-equipped ship. He was sad on account of this position, apparently so humiliating for the conqueror of the GLOOMY OCEAN; — sad on account of his long privation of the sacraments of the Church and spiritual comforts; sad, especially, because this exile, whose term was indefinite, postponed the deliverance of the Holy Places, for which his heart yearned.

In the perplexities of this situation he would, at all events, write to the Catholic Sovereigns a summary of his voyage, and demand their assistance to deliver himself and his crews from this place.

That Columbus should have prepared a message, notwithstanding the impossibility of transmitting it, must appear a singular affair; no other man in such a position would have thought of it, for the means of sending it were not within the natural range of humanity. So, accustomed as Columbus was to the bounties of the Divine Majesty, he said, in writing his letter to the Sovereigns, that if it should reach them it would be by a miracle.

It was, in truth, by a miracle that it came into their hands. This letter, for a long time forgotten, though it was formerly printed in Spain, made a great noise some forty-seven years ago, among learned societies. Venice, Bassano, Pisa, Florence, Genoa, Turin, Milan, Pavia, Rome, and Paris, occupied themselves with it. The learned Morelli, a librarian in Venice, had it republished, accompanied with notes, under the title of *LETTERA RARISSIMA*.

This letter is no less remarkable on account of its maritime transactions than for its scientific discoveries, or for the events it relates, than for thoughtful observations. It derives, especially, an extraordinary interest from the critical circumstances under which Columbus penned it, and from his mode of transmitting it, which was still more astonishing. Properly speaking, this document is neither a letter nor a report, nor a summary of the voyage; it is a

communication from the Revealer of the Globe to the Catholic Sovereigns.

The Admiral at first relates the unheard-of sufferings and difficulties of this voyage, announces the existence of the ocean on the other side of the discovered land, mentions the existence of gold mines in Veragua and in the adjacent countries; he dwells particularly on this latter godsend, which he knows is the only object of the desires of the King, and says, "I make more of the scale and of the gold mines of this country than of all that has been done in the Indies."

Before speaking of himself, he occupies himself with the wants of his crews, and with their back pay. He invokes for them the interest of the Sovereigns, and declares that never will anybody bring better news to Spain than they. The destitution of these men, who have served and suffered, recalls to his mind that those who have deserted the colony, flying from labor and calumniating his government, had received offices; which is, he says, a sad example. This lack of justice leads him to the lack of zeal shown for the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre, — the constant thought of his life. He seems, from his sense of Christian dignity, not to wish to speak again of a project already sacrificed by the ambition of Ferdinand to uncertain aggrandizements in Italy. This affair he does not call by its name; he does not name it, so well is it known to the Sovereigns; but his thoughts, nourished by the daily bread of the sacred Scriptures, present it under a biblical figure. He gives to the matter of the Holy Places awaiting their deliverance the image of the Saviour Himself, awaiting, with outstretched arms, all the day, for an unbelieving people.* He says: "The other affair, the most important one, remains where it was, calling with outstretched arms! It has been passed over as foreign, even to this hour.†

* *Expandi manus meas toda die ad populum incredulum qui graditur in via non bonâ post cogitationes suas. — Isaïe, LXV.*

† Christophe Colomb. *Lettre aux Rois Catholiques, datée de la Jamaïque, le 7 Juillet, 1503.*

Continuing this idea, which, for its own honor, he did not wish to expose more to cold disdain, or to the endless adjournments of the Court, the Revealer of the Globe, seeing plainly that he must deliver, with his own resources, the Holy Sepulchre without the coöperation of Ferdinand, demands what is due to him as the part due to God Himself. He says to the Sovereigns, "It is just to give to God what belongs to Him," as if his part were that of the Church. He reclaims the restitution of his property, and of his honors; and the chastisement of those who have robbed and calumniated him. "In acting thus," he says, "your Highnesses will show a high degree of virtue, and will leave Spain a grand example and a glorious memory as just and grateful princes."

Although his reason and his sense of equity, no less than his heart, revolted at the manner in which his services were recompensed, neither bitter reticence nor vengeful irony can be perceived in his complaint; he even excuses himself for having awakened recollections which he wished to have left buried in silence. But the enormity of the injustice, and the excess of the ingratitude he has received, move him to pity his own fate. The epic character of his misfortunes, the poetry of his trials on sea, and the iniquity done him, — assuredly without an equal after that of the Jews towards the Saviour, — transport him, mentally, beyond the time; and the Revealer of the Globe, placing himself in the point of view of after generations, deploras the mortal destiny of Christopher Columbus. He exclaims: "I have hitherto wept for others, but now Heaven have pity on me; and O Earth! weep for me! . . . Weep for me whoever has charity, truth and justice!" It is not Castile or Europe that the Messenger of the Cross invites to weep for him, but the whole world: "O Earth! weep for me!"

What other mortal ever dared to utter such language? What poet, what prophet, what hero of the Gospel, in speaking of himself, used a more energetic boldness of images, and clothed with a grander majesty the accents that

came from his heart. Here, indeed, we feel that "the style is the man." Grandeur, simplicity, sadness, boldness, are found naturally harmonized, as if they were a single utterance of the soul.

The message remained without a messenger.

Columbus knew the physical impossibility of crossing a sea of forty leagues, against the currents and the winds, in the frail canoes of the savages. It would have been a mad undertaking. For one chance of success there were a thousand chances of failure, and, consequently, of death.

During nine days he meditated and remained in the presence of God, consulting Him, and at length determined to know what, according to the expression of Peter Martyr, the Most High had decided on in his regard.

There can be no doubt that a Christian, ready for sufferings, and willing to make to God the sacrifice of his life for the preservation of his companions, could attempt this undertaking. But who would be this generous person? Columbus saw nobody capable of this heroism but his old servitor, Diego Mendez, a man who loved God and his old master, and who had no earthly ties to keep him back. The tenth day the Admiral called him to a private conference, and thus addressed him:—

"Diego Mendez, my son, none of those who are here, but you and I, know the danger in which we are placed. We are few in number, and these savage Indians are many, and of irritable and fickle natures. On the slightest provocation they could easily, from the land, set fire to our straw-thatched cabins and burn us all. The arrangement you have made with them for supplying us with provisions, and which they now fulfil with so much cheerfulness, may not continue acceptable to them, and it would not be surprising if to-morrow they brought us nothing; nor have we the means of compelling them by force to supply us, but are left entirely at their pleasure. I have thought of a means of rescuing us, if it meet with your views; in the canoe you purchased some one may venture to pass over to Hispan-

iola, and there procure a ship, by which we all may be delivered from the perilous situation in which we are placed. Tell me your opinion of the matter."

Mendez replied: "Señor, the danger that threatens us is, I well know, far greater than is imagined. As to the project of passing from this island to Hispaniola, in so small a vessel as a canoe, I hold it not only extremely difficult, but even impossible; because I know nobody who would venture to run the extreme risk of traversing a gulf of forty leagues between islands where the sea is so extremely impetuous."

There was a moment of silence. Columbus made no answer, because there was nothing to object. The question was not one of reasoning, but one of sacrifice. His looks, his manner, sufficiently told Mendez that it was meet for himself, a man of courage and of faith, who had experienced the bounty of God, to offer himself anew for the salvation of his companions.

Mendez understood this mute language, and replied: "Señor, I have several times put my life in imminent peril to save you, and all those who are with you, and God has preserved me in a miraculous manner. Still, there are murmurers who say that your Excellency intrusts to me all affairs wherein honor is to be gained, while there are others in your company who could execute them as well as I do. For this reason, I beg that you would summon all the people, and propose this enterprise to them, to see if there is among them any one that will undertake it, which I doubt. If all decline it, I will risk my life for your service, as I have many times done."

The next day all the officers and crews were assembled. The Admiral explained the state of matters to them, and proposed sending a canoe to Hispaniola. They were mute with astonishment at the proposition, and every one drew back from the thoughts of it, declaring it the height of rashness.

Then Mendez arose and said: "Señor, I have but one

life; yet I am willing to hazard it for the service of your Excellency, and the good of all here present; because I hope that God, seeing the intention that governs me, will preserve me, as He has already done so many times."

The Admiral, having heard this announcement, arose from his seat, and, calling the noble Mendez to him, embraced him reverently. He then kissed him on the cheeks, and said aloud: "I well knew that there was nobody here but you who would undertake this achievement;" and then added: "I have a firm confidence that our Lord God will enable you to overcome the dangers that threaten you, as He has done on so many other occasions."

Though he counted on the Divine bounty, Mendez neglected no precaution of human prudence. Drawing his canoe on shore, he adjusted a keel and a little mast to it, payed it carefully with a coat of tar, and took in provisions for eight persons.

The courage of Mendez excited a noble emulation. The captain of the *Biscayan*, Barthelemy Fieschi, offered to go with Mendez to Hispaniola. To protect them against the Indians, some men decided to accompany them. A second canoe was got ready. In each canoe there went with Mendez and Fieschi six Spaniards, whom they had chosen, and six Indians, which were to serve as oarsmen. It was agreed that, after having landed in Hispaniola, Fieschi should return to inform the Admiral of their safe arrival; while Mendez should take to the Governor the letter with which he was charged, and that, after having despatched a well-provisioned caravel to Jamaica, he should embark for Spain, with the despatches addressed to the Sovereigns.

SECTION II.

They set out on their perilous voyage: there was no wind; the sky was without a cloud, and the sea perfectly calm. The Indians, especially, suffered exceedingly from thirst and exhaustion. Still, the commanders cheered

them with the hope of soon arriving at a small island called Navassa, which lay in the way, and where they could procure water and take repose.

The third night had closed on them without any sight of the island. One of the Indians had died from thirst and exhaustion, and the others had become completely prostrated and disheartened; in fact, they gave up for death, and the Spaniards had to take their oars.

Mendez, the envoy of Columbus, alone trusting in God, preserved some hope. Meanwhile, the moon arose in the north. Mendez, who continually had his eyes about him, noticed that a dark, broken line concealed her lower disk; so he concluded that an opaque mass, or an island, interposed between the moon and the canoes, at no great distance. He thanked God for having succored him with this celestial sign, aroused the energy of the oarsmen, who redoubled their exertions, and the next morning, at dawn, they reached Navassa.

This was a low, flat island, having a circuit of only half a league. It was formed of bare rocks, and had neither a stream, nor a tree, nor a plant. Fortunately, however, in the hollows of the rocks there was found abundance of rain-water. Mendez rendered heartfelt thanks to God for this favor. Considering the little height and extent of the island, he saw that if his eye had not been directed to the moon at the precise moment it was, they would have passed the island without being able to distinguish it, and would infallibly have perished in the sea. They regaled themselves with this water which came from the heavens. Several of the Spaniards, notwithstanding the entreaties of their officers, drank of it so as to become sick, and some of the poor Indians drank of it to such excess that they died on the spot.

Having reposed for some hours, the voyagers reëntered their canoes. They rowed during the night, and the next morning they landed at Cape St. Michael, at present called *Tiburón*, on a beautiful shore, where they were kindly re-

ceived by the natives, who flocked in crowds to receive them, and supplied them plentifully with provisions.

Having passed two days in this place, to rest himself from his fatigues, Mendez set out for San Domingo; but having learned on the way that Ovando, the Governor-General, was in Xaragua, he repaired to the latter province, amid the greatest hardships and dangers. His confidence in God, and the remembrance of his master, sustained him in his trials and difficulties.

As soon as Mendez quitted him, Fieschi wanted to return to inform the Admiral of the safe arrival of his despatches to Hispaniola; but such was the fatigue of both the Spaniards and the Indians, that he could not prevail on one of them to accompany him. For nothing in the world would they enter anew in a canoe on such a voyage. Its late success appeared to them a miracle, which ought not to be counted on a second time. The Spaniards considered this prodigious voyage, effected in three days and three nights, as marvellous as the preservation of the prophet Jonas during the same length of time, in the belly of the whale. The intrepid gentleman was therefore obliged to await the ship which Mendez went to solicit from the Governor-General.

SECTION III.

Kept continually confined to the hulks of the caravels, the crews had their eyes constantly directed to the north. They expected the return of Captain Fieschi, and hoped to see his canoe. Many weeks had elapsed in this useless expectation. The climate, the diet — exclusively vegetable — to which they were reduced, and the absence of wine and cordials, after the unheard-of fatigues they had undergone, acted unfavorably on the weakest constitutions. A certain number of the sailors became bedridden.

These circumstances cast a deep gloom on their spirits; to which were added the uncertainty of the future, and the isolation and the state of inactivity to which they were

constrained. Now weariness leads to idleness, and idleness, as is well known, is the parent of vices. The sailors, having nothing to do, made secretly their comments on their situation.

Our readers will not have forgotten that the four caravels employed in the expedition were chartered in Seville. The Admiral had himself chosen his corps of officers, except the two Porras, who were likewise from Seville. One of these he had appointed captain of the *St. James*, and the other notary of the expedition. Columbus, through regard for Morales, their brother-in-law, treated them with the kindness of relatives, though they were incompetent for their situations. Far from being touched with an indulgence so paternal, they resolved to conquer brilliant positions for themselves, at the expense of the honor, and even the life of their benefactor.

They soon drew around them a large party, the crews being almost exclusively from Seville. They secretly assured them that the Admiral retained them in the rotten hulks of the caravels in order to have a guard, because he was exiled, and could not return to Castile; that even Hispaniola was closed against him, and his government given to another. He had sent his creatures, Mendez and Fieschi, to Spain, to appease the wrath of the Sovereigns; and it was evident that everything here was sacrificed to his personal interest. By degrees these men ruined the Admiral's authority, in recalling how the bureaux of Seville were accustomed to treat this Genoese, and how he was obliged to reinstate Roldan in his office. They assured them that, in arriving at San Domingo, they would be well received by the Governor, Ovando, who detested the Admiral, and would be delighted to know that he was forsaken by everybody.

Meanwhile Columbus, diligently employed with the sick, and deeply solicitous for the welfare of the men who had accompanied him in his search for the strait, was himself prostrated from his physical sufferings. The pains in his

joints kept him confined to his bed. Accustomed to sufferings, and exercised for a long time in the virtue of resignation, he showed no sign of impatience. A secret presentiment assured him that Diego Mendez had arrived safely in Hispaniola, and that the noble Fieschi would have returned if he had been able. His submission to the Divine will, and his perfect acquiescence in it, removed far from him the violent thoughts and the secret irritations that then agitated the minds of many of his sailors.

On the second of January the Porras and their adherents, to the number of forty-eight men, arose in open revolt. They meditated killing Columbus and his friends; but being assured by some officers that they would incur the vengeance of the Sovereigns, they for the present contented themselves with taking six canoes which the Admiral had purchased from the Indians, and with these, after helping themselves with arms and provisions, they went away, shouting defiance. There remained to the Admiral only some officers, and the sick and infirm. The canoes he had purchased as much to deprive the Indians of facilities for attacking his cabin barracks, as for any use of which they could be to him.

Supported by his domestics, he went every day to the cabin barracks, which were converted into an hospital, where he remained comforting the sick in every possible way, administering medicines to them, and dressing their sores with his own hands, pained, as they were, with gout. His attentions were blessed by God, whom he continually besought in favor of these poor people. Not only did none of them die, but in a short time all were enabled to leave the hospital.

CHAPTER VI.

The Insurgents, in imitation of Diego Mendez, want to pass to Hispaniola. — Three times they make the Attempt, and as often they are repelled by the Sea. — They plunder the Habitations of the Indians, and try to excite them against the Admiral. — The Indians determined to starve out the Strangers. — Anxiety of Columbus. — He addresses himself to God, who inspires him with the Idea of utilizing the approaching Eclipse of the Moon.

SECTION I.

FRANCESCO DE PORRAS, accompanied by his band, went towards the most eastern point of the island, — the one whence Diego Mendez had started for Hispaniola. On their way they plundered and maltreated the Indians, telling them to go and get payment from the Admiral, and to kill him if he refused satisfying them. They assured them that they had only this means of delivering themselves from him, as his object was to exterminate them, the same as he had already done elsewhere. As soon as they came to Cape Aomaquique, the rebels put into the canoes provisions, water, and some articles of merchandise, and, taking some Indian oarsmen, departed for Hispaniola.

When they had made four leagues the waves commenced swelling, and a contrary wind arose. They tried to return to the shore, but the water entered the canoes and threatened submerging them. They now sought to lighten them by throwing overboard everything except their provisions and arms. The sea becoming more and more rough, they resolved to get rid of a part of the oarsmen, in order to lighten the canoes, and, for this purpose, they killed with their dirks some of these unfortunate creatures. Seeing

this, several of the Indians of themselves jumped into the sea, trusting themselves to their expertness in swimming; but after having sustained themselves for some time on the waves, they were obliged, from fatigue, to return to the canoes. They begged only the favor of catching the canoes even with one hand, to rest themselves a little; but far from yielding to their entreaties, the rebels cut off their hands with their swords, and left them to drown. At length the rebels reached land.

They now deliberated on the course to be taken: some were for going to Cuba, and going thence to Hispaniola; others for returning to the caravels, and bringing away all the arms and merchandise that remained; and others, again, those who had joined the rebels only at the last hour, were for returning to the obedience of the Admiral. But the majority were in favor of attempting anew the passage to Hispaniola.

They waited for six weeks for a more favorable time. During this period they pillaged and ruined the surrounding country. At last, judging the auspicious moment had come, they entered their canoes; but as soon as they got some distance from the coast the waves arose, and it was with great difficulty that they got back to land.

After some time, taking the appearances of the sea for an invitation, they again reëntered their canoes, determined this time to cross this difficult passage; but again the wrath of the sea alarmed these guilty consciences. With all their efforts they could not go beyond the place they had reached the first time. They considered themselves happy in being able to get back to land. Relinquishing from that time an idea which appeared to them chimerical, and doubting not that Mendez and Fieschi had perished in their attempt, they abandoned their canoes and resumed their business of pillage.

SECTION II.

The prudence of Columbus was such, that a friendly relation was preserved with the Indians. They brought provisions in abundance, but, by degrees, required more and more for them. Either through the instigations of the rebels, or on account of the excesses committed by the latter in other parts of the island, the Indians immediately ceased from bringing any further supplies. This interruption of relations with them caused great disquietude. To resort to force would be an alternative full of danger, and of but temporary efficacy, while the Admiral and the convalescents would be left exposed in the caravels. All the sea-stores were nearly gone, and gaunt famine now threatened the Spaniards.

In this horrible perplexity Columbus alone preserved some hope, and besought the Lord, his Master, as he always did; and, as usual, his appeal was not in vain.

It was on the occasion of this threatened famine that the well-known prediction of the eclipse of the moon took place, and which several writers have arranged so as to make it a worthy counterpart of the story of the egg broken on the end.

• Yet between the two anecdotes there exists all the difference there is between fable and reality. The story of the egg is a fable, and the one of the predicted eclipse a reality. We have only to rectify some of the accessory circumstances, and especially the words attributed to Columbus on this occasion.

It has been inconsiderately said that the Admiral, having calculated an eclipse, invited the Indians as it were to a show, and that he told them his God was incensed against them because they refused furnishing him with provisions; that in three days they would see the moon, at its rising, redden and then become dark, as a sign of the punishments that would be inflicted on them; and that at the time of the eclipse the frightened Indians supplicated Columbus to appease his God, promising to furnish him, in future, with

provisions; that then having adroitly shut himself up, he seemed in converse with his God, and that a little before the eclipse was over, he announced to them that he had obtained their pardon. This gross juggling, an unworthy way of working on the credulity of the savages, and of bringing forward the sacred name of God, appears to us to be absolutely at variance with the almost evangelical character of Columbus.

And first, let us remark, that the words ascribed to Columbus are by no means *verbatim*, and that they could not have been so.

The cotemporary writers, Fernando Columbus, Diego Mendez, Oviedo, Las Casas, were not able to collect the exact words of Columbus. Fernando Columbus, the only eye-witness, then scarcely fifteen years old, had taken no notes of them, and he wrote his account of these events more than twenty-nine years after their occurrence. Evidently, he may have forgotten the exact words used by his father. Diego Mendez was then absent, and it was only at the end of thirty-two years that he penned it as a hearsay. Oviedo had no knowledge of this fact but only indirectly. It is known that he willingly lent himself to the representations of the enemies of Columbus: besides, he gathered their version of it only twenty-five years after the event; and Las Casas, who still wrote, at the age of eighty-four years, his History of the Indies, did not terminate it until fifty-three years after the death of the Admiral. It is evident, then, that neither the one nor the other have derived directly from their true source the words they attribute to Columbus, and that among all these versions that of Fernando Columbus, an eye-witness, is to be preferred. But it is evident to us that the translators of the text of Fernando, which is lost, allowed some inaccuracies to glide into their version. In the main the accounts of the four cotemporary writers appear to us worthy of credit as regards the principal fact. They agree upon the main point, and seem to err only in attributing to Columbus con-

duct and language that were incompatible with his character. This is explained by the distance of time between the event and the published account of it. When historians have reported as a curious novelty this astronomical expedient, in order to show the inventive genius of Columbus, they have, in good faith it is true, attributed to him the language they would themselves have used in his place, — that which they considered becoming his situation. It is their own spirit they have benevolently lent him; this is plainly seen.

Let us, at last, state the real circumstances of this event, and restore its true aspect.

When, through Diego Mendez, Columbus made a treaty with the caciques of the neighborhood of Santa Gloria, to be furnished with provisions at current prices, he told them, first and foremost, that God, his Master, had made him come to this place, and that he would remain there until it would please Him that he should leave it. He presented himself, then, to them in his real character, — as a guest sent them by Providence, — and kept the sailors on board the caravels, to preserve the hospitable islanders from their cupidity. When, notwithstanding his vigilance, the Indians, violating their promises, wanted to starve out the shipwrecked Spaniards, Columbus, seeing no human resource for escaping the threatened famine, invoked the aid of the Divine Majesty.

In place of aiding him with a material miracle, as He would have done for a patriarch or a prophet of the Old Law, and of sending him some manna or some quails, the Most High assisted him with an idea. He succored His servant with a notion derived from the scientific order dependent on the architecture of the heavens. He inspired him with a means that had never been employed since the commencement of certain history, and of which the Admiral himself would never have thought. God reminded him that in three days there would be an eclipse of the moon. Thus the moon, that sign by which Diego Mendez was preserved

from a horrible death from thirst, was to save Christopher Columbus from famine. In his perplexities, every time the Messenger of the Cross went to pray, the idea of the eclipse came into his mind. Columbus inferred from this circumstance that he must derive his safety from the eclipse. God simply indicated to him the subject; his genius furnished him with the mode of rendering it efficacious.

The Admiral concluded to utilize this phenomenon, so as to secure a supply of provisions, and show the Indians the superiority of the God of the Christians over their zemes. He sent an interpreter to the caciques to invite them to a grand exhibition, which the strangers would give the third day from that. As he foresaw, they came in crowds. He then reproached them with their breach of faith, and their unkindness. He recalled to them that he was their guest by the will of God, his Master. He told them that this God, who permitted His messenger to arrive happily in Hayti, had, on the contrary, raised the sea, and repulsed the attempts of the rebels who had separated from him. He added, that God, his Lord, knew of their project to starve out the strangers, notwithstanding the agreements made with them to supply the caravels; and that assuredly He, who rewards the good and punishes the wicked, was displeased with them on account of their want of good faith and humanity. And to prove to them the superiority of the servants of his God over their zemes, he announced to them what their *bohutis* were ignorant of, and what even their zemes did not know: that the same evening, at the rising of the moon, they would see that luminary reddish, notwithstanding the serenity of the heavens, and then become obscure, and refuse giving light.

Many of the Indians were alarmed at the prediction, while others went away deriding it with mockeries. When the night came, the blood-color of the moon made the most daring of them tremble. When they beheld a dark shadow stealing over her, they shrieked with terror, and ran with provisions to the caravels, supplicating the Admiral to

appease his offended God, and promising that they would, in future, bring provisions regularly. Yielding to their entreaties, the Admiral said he would go and speak to his God; and, in fact, he did retire to his cabin. Whoever comprehends the character of Columbus will have no doubt that he prayed to God for them, beseeching Him to open their hearts to the light of the Gospel, to inspire them with mild and humane sentiments, and to avert from them the evils with which the natives of Hispaniola were afflicted.

The eclipse began to decrease when the Admiral, having finished his prayers, returned from his cabin, and told the caciques that he had spoken to his Master in their favor; that God heard their promise of treating the Christians kindly, and of bringing them provisions; and that, as they entertained these sentiments, his Master would be favorable to them. He told them that this phenomenon, an object of terror to the greater portion of idolatrous peoples, was not a threatening presage to the servants of Christ, and that soon the moon would be no longer of a reddish-brown color, but would reappear in her ordinary pure whiteness. Columbus, from this circumstance, took occasion to show the Indians the sign of Salvation, and to inspire them with a salutary fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom. In fact, the caciques thanked the Admiral, and went away praising the God of the Christians, of whom they no longer spoke but with the greatest respect and reverence. From that time they steadily furnished provisions, for which they were scrupulously paid in articles of exchange.*

* Those who reject the supernatural will find insuperable difficulty, not in explaining this eclipse, but in explaining how it occurred precisely at the time Columbus so much needed it. For our own part, the more we reflect on the circumstances under which it took place, and call to mind how very rarely such eclipses occur, the more we are inclined to think that its occurrence at that particular time was, as regarded Columbus, of a truly providential or miraculous character. — B.

SECTION III.

The favors Columbus had on so many occasions received from God, gave him the very greatest confidence in His bounty. Knowing that here below, as throughout the universe, nothing happens but by His permission, he sought to know what could be the object of the interruption of his enterprise, and whence proceeded his long delay in that place, so unavailing for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

He attributed to diabolical influence the contrarieties he had experienced during this voyage. He believed he could see the hellish origin of this unexampled persecution he had endured. Nevertheless, after having submitted him to terrible proofs, the Lord had come to his aid. Notwithstanding the fierceness of the struggle, He had permitted him to erect the Cross on different points of the new continent. He had miraculously conducted him, in a shipwrecked state, across seven hundred sea miles, and left him in a place he was acquainted with already. But why does God appear to abandon him now?

Columbus continually thought of his strange situation. He took to himself a confidant, who, at the end of three centuries, has revealed to us what his thoughts were, and shows what his prepossessions were during the painful anxiety of this state of exile. This confidant was the sketch of the Book of the Prophecies, which the Admiral took with him on his voyage, in addition to some rare works, the ordinary companions of his route, and among others the "Imago Mundi" of the learned Cardinal Peter D'Ailly.

It is seen by the Book of the Prophecies that this soul remained unchangeably youthful and poetic beneath the weight of years and the teasings of sufferings. It was in verse that the Revealer of the Globe spoke to himself. He proposed to himself the question, "What can be the

cause of so long an exile?"* and his acquaintance with divine matters, his faith, rather than his genius, sought the solution of the problem.

Eight months had elapsed since the departure of Diego Mendez, and still there was no account from Hispaniola. Except the Admiral, certain of his safe arrival, nobody else preserved the least hope on the subject. Admitting the prodigy that Mendez had reached the shore of Hispaniola, there were yet, from Cape St. Michael to San Domingo, more than a hundred leagues to be traversed across rugged mountains!

In order that no degree of bitterness should be withheld from Columbus, it was among the persons whom, by his attentions and moral medication he had restored to health, that there was formed, secretly, a conspiracy still more formidable than the first one. Instigated by the apothecary Bernal, the old patients resolved to seize on the remaining canoes, take everything that was on board, and massacre the Admiral, who had, as they said, put them in this dire situation. The secret was buried in a profound silence. Columbus suspected no danger; but Providence watched over him. The time was fixed: it was during the night that the plot was to be carried into effect. A few hours before the moment fixed for its execution, towards evening, a sail was descried in the north-east, like an apparition on the sea. Its appearance frustrated the perpetration of the contemplated crime. The ship approached the shore, and cast anchor at some distance from the caravels.

SECTION IV.

All the Castilians saw with joy, mingled with doubt, this little sail, which they thought ought to cast anchor nearer.

* At page 77 of the *Libro de las Profecias* are found the following lines, written by the hand of Columbus:—

“Qual sea la causa de tanto destierro
Por mill prolongado y mas de quinientos.”

The boat of the brigantine soon came near the *Capitana*. The boatmen asked for a rope, and on its being cast to them, they attached to it a barrel of wine, together with a side of bacon, which were drawn up into the caravel. Then the officer tied to the end of a boat-hook a letter for the Admiral, and immediately removed away some distance from the caravel. In recognizing him, most of the sailors were struck with astonishment. It was the traitor Diego de Escobar, that commandant who had revolted against the Viceroy of the Indies, and who had, with his troops, passed over to Roldan. The mission confided to him by Ovando constituted a grave offence towards the Admiral.

In the mean time, Columbus left his cabin and came on the deck. Escobar called out to him, saying that the Governor was sorry he had not in the harbor a vessel large enough to send for him and his men; that his interests should be attended to; that as soon as possible he should be delivered from that place; and offered to take charge of his reply, if he would have it ready immediately, because the brigantine would have to leave without delay. Columbus acknowledged the receipt of the message from Ovando; recommended to his favor Diego Mendez and Fieschi, assuring him that they went with no other object than that of informing him of the disaster, and to request his aid. He advised him of the revolt of Porras, who had added to the perils of the situation, and finished in recommending himself to his care and diligence.

During this time the boat remained still. From the caravels the pilots put some questions to the boatmen; but, complying with the order they had received, these men remained silent. As soon as the despatch of the Admiral was sealed, the boat came back near the *Capitana*, took it, and then pushed vigorously for the brigantine, which immediately hoisted her sails.

CHAPTER VII.

The Rebels attack the Admiral. — They are defeated by the Adelantado, who makes their Chief a Prisoner. — Columbus receives some Aid, and returns to Hispaniola. — He departs for Spain. — Successive Tempests. — Providentially aided, he arrives at San Lucar.

SECTION I.

WHEN, the next morning, the crews saw no more of the brigantine, they thought it was all a dream. The circumstances of her arrival and departure, and the reserve and silence of the boatmen, seemed to the officers a matter of evil augur. They concluded that the Governor did not want to save them, on account of his enmity towards the Admiral. Columbus sought to dispel their suspicions, professing himself satisfied with the communications received, and gave as a reason for the sudden departure of the brigantine, the desire to bring caravels more promptly to their aid.

In real truth Ovando had sent the traitor Escobar only to see if the Admiral could, with his own resources, leave that place. There was full proof of this. But the interest excited by the misfortune of Columbus, and the earnest entreaties of some Franciscans, prevented the Governor from thwarting the exertions made by Diego Mendez on behalf of his shipwrecked companions, and made him, at last, appear to desire to succor them himself.

With his sentiments of adoptive paternity, the Admiral was grieved to see a part of his crews foolishly separated from him; he considered them as children who had gone astray. He hoped, by the announcement of a speedy return

to Castile, to bring them back to the paths of duty, and to spare the poor Indians the injuries the rebels continually inflicted on them. He offered them full and entire pardon, on condition that they would reënter the caravels without further delay. In order to prove to them that he had received news from Hispaniola, he sent them a part of the bacon and some of the wine that had been brought by Escobar, and chose, as messengers, two men of merit who had had relations with Porras. When these two messengers appeared at the rebel quarters, Porras came to meet them, and took them apart, unwilling that his men should hear their propositions, lest they should accede to them. Still they knew that Diego Mendez had arrived in Hispaniola, and that caravels were expected daily.

We cannot follow this brutal revolt throughout. Let it suffice to say that at length the rebels came to attack the Admiral, when they were met by the Adelantado, and the few troops who had remained with him, and that the Adelantado, with prodigious valor, overcame six of their most valiant men, who had sworn to take his life, slaying most of them, and making a prisoner of Francesco de Porras. The rest of the rebels, finding themselves deprived of their leaders, were soon put to flight.

Columbus thanked his brother, but especially the Lord. He rendered many thanks to God, holding it for certain that He had delivered him from death. This victory cost the Admiral's men only two wounds. Don Bartholomew soon recovered from the one he had received, but unfortunately the brave captain of the *Galician*, Pedro de Terreros, succumbed in a few days after from his wound, which he received in the groin.

The rebels, having no longer a chief, offered to make their submission. They bound themselves by oaths and fearful imprecations to be obedient in future. The Admiral deigned to pardon them all. He merely retained Porras a prisoner on board the caravel, placed the insurgents under the command of a trusty captain, and cantoned them in the

island, in order to avoid collisions, which may take place if they should reënter the barracks in the caravels.

SECTION II.

More than a year had elapsed when, to the unspeakable joy of the crews, two caravels entered the bay of Santa Gloria. They were under the command of Diego de Salcedo, a brevetted perfumer, and a former esquire of the household of the Admiral. The first of these caravels was chartered by the indefatigable Diego Mendez, and was laden with bread, wine, meats and fruits. The second was sent by Ovando, whom public opinion forced to show kind feelings, in spite of him. He feared Mendez would have the start of him, so he confided his caravel, also, to the command of Salcedo. As soon as the two caravels had left the port of San Domingo, Diego Mendez, who had freighted another ship, embarked for Castile with Bartholomew Fieschi, to give the Sovereigns an account of the recent maritime expedition.

Columbus, having thanked God for His mercy, went on board the caravel chartered at his expense, with his officers, and the sailors who had remained faithful to him. The others took their place in the caravel sent by the Governor. The twenty-eighth of June the ships left the Bay of Santa Gloria, where so many dangers and mysterious aids, so many sufferings and invisible consolations, had alternately cast down and raised up the largest heart in the world.

The struggle the Admiral had sustained against the billows during the whole course of this voyage, since the solemn hour that he had predicted the tempest, recommenced as soon as he was out of the bay. The twofold violence of the winds and the waves detained him more than a month in this passage. A circumstance worthy of note is, that with his sails, and his experienced sailors, it required continual manœuvring, for more than a month, to cross the space which, by the divine favor, his envoy, Diego

Mendez, had traversed in less than four days with oars, and in canoes!

Notwithstanding the nautical improvements of our era, the hydrographic study of these regions, aided by experience, there is not this day a naval officer, midshipman, or admiral, that, at the price of a kingdom, would attempt the passage from Jamaica to Hispaniola or Hayti, under the same conditions, and with the same embarkation that Diego Mendez did. It cannot be denied that during this fourth voyage of Columbus, the prodigious is continually met with. It will be understood with what reason he said to the Catholic Sovereigns, alluding to matters so extraordinary, "Who can believe what I have written here?" And still he adds, immediately after, "I say that in this letter I HAVE NOT RECOUNTED THE HUNDREDTH PART OF WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO ME." Those who were with the Admiral can attest the truth of it.*

At length the Admiral reached the little island of Beata, whence, by way of land, he apprised the Governor of his approach; then continuing his voyage, he arrived at San Domingo on the thirteenth of August.

The Governor, with a grand cortege, composed of the office-holders and principal inhabitants, came to greet Columbus. The public hastened to lavish tokens of respect on him. Seamen honored in his person the incomparable navigator; and the Franciscans, the Messenger of Salvation, the precursor of their future preaching. The people saluted in him the majesty of misfortune borne with patience; his reverses gained him all hearts. It was in the government palace that Ovando installed him, and gave him fêtes and banquets.

Notwithstanding the appearance of these good relations, the Admiral, who always saw to the bottom of things, knew how to reduce to their true value these demonstrations of

* *Lettre aux Rois Catholiques datée de la Jamaïque le 7 Juillet, 1503.*

Ovando ; and, on his side, the Governor could not believe but that the Admiral sought to obtain influence in the island, hoping to be soon put again in possession of his rights, for the nomination of Ovando limited his powers to two years.

Soon Ovando wished to show Columbus that he was the real Governor of Hispaniola. He raised a question of competency, and pretended to take cognizance of the rebellion of Porras, because it took place within the limits of his jurisdiction. He required the surrender of Porras, detained on board the caravel, and after the first examination set him at liberty, without any judicial inquiry, or committing anything to writing. Moreover, he even spoke of arresting those who had taken up arms to defend the Admiral. What he did in this respect was, he said, only in the interest of justice, and for the maintenance of the rights of the Government, which those of the Admiralty could not overrule. Columbus determined to bear patiently every injustice rather than occasion the least difficulty in the colony, limiting himself to representing how illusory would be the authority of an Admiral, if he could not punish a revolt on board his ship. Then he smiled with that calm, Christian resignation with which he was so deeply imbued.

Such of the miserable partisans of Porras as had not already deserted on arriving, demanded to be permitted to return to Spain. Destitute of all resources, and even of clothing, they solicited passages in some ship. The Admiral, after their rebellion, could justly have left them to the care of the Governor, and embarked solely with his own people and his officers in the caravel, and the more so because one ship could not contain all the passengers ; but, considering all they had suffered during this voyage of discovery, he pitied them for their crimes, for what he called their "moral infirmity," and considered he could not, with a good conscience, abandon them. He appropriated for their use the caravel that was being refitted, and, at his

own expense, bought another, in which he himself was to sail with his family and friends.

To meet this increase of expenses it became necessary for him to see what revenue had been received for him during his absence. According to a rough calculation made by his friends, the total amount should come to about eleven thousand castillans; and still only four thousand were accounted for. This produced a warm contest with the Governor; the latter, in the discussion, skilfully laid his snares, but the Admiral baffled them, and he remained master of his just indignation. The only thing he did was to use all his efforts to have the caravel refitted as soon as possible; for his stay in San Domingo in the house of so craftily polite an adversary, became insupportable to him. Besides, he was placed in a false position; he could not utter his views, give counsel, or freely express his thoughts about anything. He felt that he was a stranger in the administration of a country of which he was the donor, the Viceroy, and the perpetual Governor! He saw this magnificent island stained with blood and devastated, where he wanted to introduce civilization and the blessings of Christianity.

The sufferings of the poor Indians especially afflicted the heart of Columbus. Alas! it was not this he expected when he discovered these countries. He loved these artless and whimsical children of the forests; he had received the gift of reading their hearts and of subjugating them by his personal ascendancy. They shed tears of grief the first time he separated from them at Navidad. At Santa Gloria they likewise bewailed his departure. But now he could do nothing in their favor; his only hope for them was from the justice of the Queen. Alas! that noble Isabella added still more to his afflictions. The latest accounts from Castile informed him that she was momentarily despaired of. This news transpierced the heart of Columbus with grief.

SECTION III.

At length, on the twelfth of September, Columbus, after having bid farewell to the Governor, and received the hearty adieus of the most honorable of the colonists, entered with his friends, his officers and his men, on board the caravel he had purchased. The other one that was refitted was appropriated for the other mariners who wished to return to Spain, and was commanded by the Adelantado.

When they were about two leagues from the port, and still in sight of it, a sudden squall struck the mainmast of the Admiral's vessel, shattering it in pieces to the quarter-deck. In place of returning to have it replaced by another, he immediately went, with his family, on board of the vessel commanded by the Adelantado, and, sending back the damaged ship to port, continued on his course.

Throughout the voyage he experienced very tempestuous weather. On the ninth of October, a sudden gust shattered the mainmast in four places. He was confined to his bed, at the time, from rheumatism; yet by his advice, and the inventive genius of the Adelantado, the damage was skillfully repaired; the mast was shortened, and the weak parts were fortified by pieces taken from other parts of the vessel; then the whole was well secured with cordage.

A few days after, another tempest sprung the foremast. There remained yet seven hundred leagues to be traversed. Far from making for the Azores to repair and replace his masting, as any other commander would have done, the Admiral, accustomed to the favors of the Most High, appeared to be no way concerned about this new accident. His pains left him no repose; besides, his mind was agitated with gloomy presentiments. He longed to get near the Queen, and he continued to make straight for Castile. The remaining part of this voyage continued difficult and painful. Tempest-tossed for several weeks, he at length, on the seventh of November, "by the permission of God," arrived at the port of San Lucar.

CHAPTER VIII.

Columbus sojourns in Seville. — Sickness and Death of Isabella. — Unspeakable Grief of Columbus at her Death. — His Sickness, Poverty, and Moral Sufferings. — From his Bed he counteracts an Intrigue of Fonseca in Rome. — Fruitless Reclamations of Columbus before Ferdinand. — He nobly rejects an Offer made him by the King.

SECTION I.

THE adored Isabella was succumbing from a chronic disease. Notwithstanding the ardent desire of Columbus to have gone to Medina del Campo, where the Court resided, he was obliged to remain in Seville, the nursery of his enemies. His sufferings detained him at a hotel. The few friends he counted in this city were then absent; even his great admirer, the learned Gaspard Gorricio, had, for the time, left his monastery. He was like a stranger in this city, which had become the seat of colonial affairs. During his absence the bureaux of the marine had received their complete organization. The Admiralty of the Indies formed a true marine and colonial ministration under the presidency of Don Juan de Fonseca, the implacable enemy of the great man.

Columbus, who expected to be able, at last, to rest from his fatigues and cares, thus found himself unwillingly under the lash of his persecutors. The sailors whom, through pity, he had brought back at his own expense, and among whom there were several rebels, could not get their pay from the bureaux. Knowing his generosity, they importuned him, well aware that he would not forget to urge their claims with all the earnestness in his power.

Confined to his bed, almost unable to move, and writing

only with great pain, he knew of the proceedings of his enemies, and that the rebels who had made an attempt on his life were at large, and were received at Court plotting against him, while the documents of their procedure had remained in the caravel that had returned to San Domingo to be masted. Columbus wrote to the Sovereigns to apprise them of what had occurred.

The Admiral, oppressed with his physical ailments, had still to bear the keenest moral sufferings. He knew that the heroic woman who had comprehended him, who had sympathized with him, and who was his protectress and friend, was a prey to an incurable disease. He could neither write nor speak to her at this dreadful moment. He dared not recall himself directly to her remembrance, — a matter he yet counted on; besides, the virtuous Doña Juana de la Torre was no more, who alone would, perhaps, have the courage of speaking of him by the sick-bed of Isabella.

The Queen had received the letter which the Admiral wrote the seventh of July, 1503, from Jamaica, and which was miraculously carried by Diego Mendez to Hispaniola, and thence to Castile. She had not waited for the arrival of this trusty squire to occupy herself with the interests of the Admiral. While he was languishing on the coast of Jamaica, she gave a proof of her constancy and grateful remembrance, in nominating his eldest son to the rank of body-guard, with a pay of fifty thousand maravedis per annum. Soon after, she wrote twice to the Governor, Ovando, to take good care of the rights of the Admiral, conformably to the royal stipulations. Later she had accorded to his brother, the Abbé Don Diego Columbus, letters of naturalization, in order to be able to invest him with a benefice.

Isabella admitted into her presence the pious and faithful servitor of Columbus. She listened to the details of the voyage; and on learning from him the state of the colony, — the massacres of Xaragua and Higüey, the horrible

slavery for which the work in the mines served as a pretext, the lamentable end of the noble and hospitable Anacoana, — her heart writhed with grief, and, with an indignation that cannot be expressed, she said to the President of the Council of Justice, in speaking of Ovando, — “I will appoint him to a place that will never be coveted.”

To reward the devotedness of the valorous Diego Mendez, whom Columbus made a captain, she raised him to the nobility, giving him, with his letters-patent, armorial bearings that would perpetuate the form of his heroism.

It was rumored about Court that Isabella had exacted a promise from the King to recall from office and chastise Ovando, who was reeking with the blood of the Indians; to protect this distant people, whom she had so much desired to range under the standard of the Cross, and to reinstate in his rights, in his titles, and in his government, the Viceroy of the Indies, Don Christopher Columbus. This rumor was well founded. It was even said in Seville that the Queen had spoken of Columbus in her will. This was a mistake. Motives of prudence imposed silence on her, which, far from implying forgetfulness, testified her faithful remembrance of him. It was even in the interest of the Admiral that she omitted making any disposition in his favor. Already he had enemies enough; she feared, for him, the animosity of the King. On the twenty-sixth of November, 1504, Isabella breathed her last, and with her death the glory and the happiness of Spain became eclipsed.

SECTION II.

During this time a keen anguish agitated the mind of Columbus. He shuddered at the idea of losing Isabella, who was the soul of discoveries, the patroness of the Indies, the protectress of truth and of justice, the image of the beautiful and the good, the ideal of regal superiority. He addressed his prayers to the Adorable Trinity for the preservation of her life.

On being informed of her death, who shall tell the rending of heart and the bitterness of grief he experienced? The father who loses his only daughter feels no keener anguish of heart. To paint this unutterable affliction it would be necessary to measure in its sublimity that attraction for each other of the two souls which Providence had predestined to elaborate the greatest work of the human race. By its immensity the grief of Columbus bordered on the infinite; its multiple suffering was as vast as the spirit that animated the body of that Queen, which was stamped with an indelible majesty. It was the rending of a superior sympathy, rooted in tenderness of soul, fecundated with the splendors of faith, and vivified in Christ, who was its principle, its safeguard, and its immortal end.

His only stay in this world was gone. He had lost more than a protectress, more than a sovereign: he had lost a friend. Yes, the Queen loved with a maternal tenderness, and honored with a respectful deference, the man whom God had sent her to double the known space of creation. Isabella refound in Columbus her own qualities; that is to say, her eminent virtues. She admired in him especially that modesty of a hero, that simplicity of a saint, and that artlessness of a child which the Patriarch of the Ocean preserved throughout the vicissitudes of his unequalled labors. An involuntary respect inclined the great and venerated Isabella towards this old man, breathing grandeur, transpiring the sublime, and beaming from this world with the impress of immortality.

Columbus always saw in the incomparable Isabella the type of purity, of constancy, and of fidelity to her word; the flower of human graces, and the poetry of humanity. To whom will he henceforth recount the ravishments which the marvels of unknown regions produced in him? Who now will undertake new discoveries? Who now will follow him in thought, and thank him for his distant fatigues? Who will come to aid him? to realize, in fine, the chief

object of his hopes, — the deliverance of the tomb of the Divine Saviour?

When he understood that his loss was effected in the death of Isabella, he experienced a lifelessness of heart. His desolation was as mute as the tomb; his unspeakable grief found no utterance. It is only known that his physical sufferings were redoubled by it.

As soon as Isabella, that sign of honor, of confidence and of union, was dead, the spirit of discord, appeared. Mistrust and discontentment showed themselves in the high places of the Court; looks became gloomy, and grave inquietudes disturbed men of peace and of foresight. Machiavelism took possession of politics; jealous mediocrities and adroit hypocrisies raised their heads, and the good and the just became objects of suspicion.

SECTION III.

Since his landing, Columbus could not leave his bed, nor use his hands, especially during the day, on account of a debility which prevented him from holding the pen, and permitted him writing only at night. He was obliged to take from the hours of sleep those for his correspondence, and for the management of his affairs. Yet the activity of his mind, in the midst of his sufferings, astonishes us.

After his arrival he learned that the Sovereign Pontiff, Julius II., no doubt knowing the relations established between his predecessors and the Revealer of the New World, complained of not having received from him news from the Indies. He made a report of his discoveries to the Chief of the Church; but, fearing that his semi-official communications with the Pontifical Court should be made a ground for new accusations, before sending this document to Rome he thought it prudent to give copies of it to the King, and to the new Archbishop of Seville, Diego de Deza, his friend, and formerly his defender in the celebrated conference at Salamanca.

But what we admire still more than his moral force, and his patience in his sufferings, is his generosity of character, and the evangelical perfection of his charity, which caused him to take under his shield the seamen he had brought back with him, a part of whom had threatened his life. He did not limit himself to pardoning them. To furnish them with means to return home, he was obliged to submit to a deduction of twelve hundred castillans discount on the money he received at San Domingo. On his arrival at Seville, in his first letter to the Sovereigns he earnestly recommended to their solicitude those men whose pay was still due, and whose need was extreme. Some days after he still reminded the Court of their necessities and poverty. The twenty-eighth of December he recommended to his son Diego to intercede on their behalf. Without fearing to be considered importunate by his persistence, on the first of December he recommenced writing in their favor.

But this energy of claiming for others justice and humanity, he could not use in his own regard; he limited himself to recalling to mind his services, and the engagements of the Crown towards him. He did all that his situation permitted him to do. On his arrival at Seville he wrote to the Sovereigns, announcing his return, and stating that he awaited their orders. Ferdinand, on this occasion, said the most flattering things of him to his son Diego, which the latter, in the innocence of his heart, believing them to be sincere, transmitted to his father. But to the message the Admiral added a memorial, in the form of "a very long letter," on the administration of the government of the Indies, in which he depicted in its reality the situation of the colony, the origin of the evils there, and indicated the proper remedies for them. No reply came to this memorial.

The Admiral wrote twice afterwards, without being honored with any answer. He wrote repeatedly to his son Diego to obtain an answer for him, but it was in vain. Diego could get none.

Columbus having been informed by some member of the Bureaus of Seville that three bishoprics were to be established in the Indies, he demanded from the King the favor of being heard before anything definite would be decided on in this matter. No answer came. In the course of December he learned from public rumor that presentations had been made and approved of, in the ordinary manner.

During the time that the Admiral was languishing in disfavor, — sick, and in a state of destitution, — in this calumnious city, become for him another Cedar, the Chief of the Church, who took a deep interest in the viceroyalty of the Herald of the Cross, was astonished that in this creation of bishoprics, caused by the rapid progress of the conversion of the natives, the Viceroy of the Indies had uttered no opinion, and that no reference had been made to him. This silence of Ferdinand in regard to Columbus, the Cross-bearer of Catholicity, appeared suspicious.

At the Pontifical Court they were not ignorant of the envy and persecutions of which he was the object. This erection of an archbishopric and two bishoprics all at the same time, to provide for the sudden wants of the three centres of population, caused some doubts in the Roman chancery. Undoubtedly the three bishops proposed, offered all the guarantees of piety and of orthodoxy that could be desired. They were the Franciscan Father Garcias de Padilla, the Doctor Pedro de Deza, nephew to the Archbishop of Seville, and the Licentiate Alonzo Mansa, a canon of Salamanca. So these nominations were approved of by the Holy See. Nevertheless, in its prudence it did not expedite the Bulls until it would be more fully informed about the state of affairs. Thus the Court of Rome listened to, as if it heard them, the wishes of the Admiral, which Ferdinand had rejected. The bishops did not depart for Hispaniola.

If Columbus insisted so much on giving his advice in the creation of these bishoprics, it was that the glory of God and the honor of the Sovereign Pontiff filled him with a pious solicitude. He felt fully persuaded that an undue

advantage was taken of the distance, to lead the Holy Father into error, and to make his sacred authority serve for worldly purposes.

This circumstance, which has not hitherto been remarked by any historian, deserves to be placed in its true light.

Hoping to increase the importance of his government, and give Hispaniola a rank or consequence that would conduce to his ulterior views, Ovando conceived the design of soliciting the creation of an archdiocese and two dioceses in the island. The sole fact of this creation would sufficiently attest his religious zeal and his administrative ability.

He demanded, then, the erection of the archbishopric of Xaragua, having as suffragans the bishopric of Larez and that of Concepcion. Ovando found a particular interest in erecting into an episcopal see the village of Larez, built under his auspices, and which contained about sixty inhabitants. By this means he expected to attract settlers there, and perpetuate his enterprise. As to Concepcion, where there were grouped about a hundred and fifty individuals, protected by the solid fortress that had been built by the Admiral, the bishop would not have to complain of such a residence. It received the name of a city: the place was salubrious and well protected; he could save his soul there in peace, and could consider himself safe from all the attacks of his future flock.

As regarded the archbishopric, it seemed natural enough to establish it in San Domingo, the capital of the colony, which possessed a citadel, a military post, and the largest population of any place in the whole island. But although Ovando wished the creation of an archiepiscopal see to increase the lustre of his government, his ambitious and domineering character made him fear the presence of a superior and independent authority, who could have limited and controlled certain points of his proceedings. He proposed, then, the establishment of the archdiocese at Xaragua, a place distant from the capital some seventy leagues, across mountains and valleys, without an open road, without

dwellings and without inhabitants. Xaragua ! that dolorous image, that frightful memento which Ovando ought never to have recalled ! a place that was burnt after the massacre ! a heap of ruins and of ashes given up to silence, to desertion, and to dismay !

Still, such a proposition was examined, weighed, and approved of by Fonseca, president of colonial affairs. Lo ! how this nominal bishop would have organized the service of God in Hispaniola ! He dared to say that Christianity made great progress in the Indies, because idolatry diminished there daily. Idolatry, in fact, had diminished there, inasmuch as the Indians disappeared from sight. After the massacres, the executions in mass, the assassinations, the arbitrary murders and the deaths caused by the works on the mines, — and thus idolatry was getting gradually extinguished. Could such means have gained souls to Christianity ? It will now be understood why everything was concealed, or tried to be concealed, from the Admiral ; how shameful trafficking and spiritual turpitude were in dread of his penetrating and clear discernment.

The views of Columbus were secretly communicated by him to the Apostolic Nuncio. The evangelical solicitude of the Herald of the Cross did not end here.

Notwithstanding his pecuniary embarrassments, he contrived, partly by the aid and credit of a few friends, to raise funds to defray the expenses of a voyage to Rome, and despatched there, in all haste, the Adelantado, with a message to the Holy Father. Don Bartholomew, always ready to comply with the desires of his brother, departed under the pretence of going to visit his native country, in order to excite no suspicion, and speedily accomplished his voyage. We have the proof that in 1505 he was in Rome, where he edited the history of the first voyage of Christopher Columbus, accompanied with a chart of his discoveries.

The stay of the Adelantado in the Eternal City was not of long duration, but the object of his journey was attained.

The Holy Father refused to expedite the briefs. All the entreaties of the Spanish Ambassador had no effect on the Holy See. Before the Chief of the Church the confidential advice of Columbus prevailed over the assertions of the Spanish Crown and the cunning of diplomacy.

While in Seville, Columbus one day received a visit from Amerigo Vespucci, who was called to Court, by the King, about marine affairs, and who came to receive the commands of the Admiral; that is to say, under the pretence of making himself agreeable to him, he sought to obtain a recommendation from him. Amerigo had made with Alonzo de Ojeda and the pilot Juan de la Cosa, a voyage to *Terra Firma*, by the aid of the charts of the Admiral, of which the director of marine, Juan de Fonseca, had traitorously given them a copy; and still Columbus seemed to forget his participation in that felony. He only knows or remembers that he has voyaged, made observations, and suffered without much advantage to his fortune; and, as all his former relations with Vespucci were agreeable, Columbus, without looking closer into his character, judges him to be "a very good man." He accepts the proffered services of Vespucci, and gives him a letter of introduction to his son Diego.

The Admiral having received no answer to his letters to the King, flattered himself that by going to Court he could verbally advance his interests. The weather had become mild. He thought he could bear the gait of a mule,—that of a horse being too painful for his state of suffering. Already, on the twenty-ninth of December, he had written to obtain from the King permission to make the journey on a mule, "saddled and bridled," a matter that was interdicted by an ordinance.*

Don Diego obtained the permission, which was signed the twenty-third of February; but the severe pains of the

* The ordinance referred to, was because the universal use of mules occasioned a decline in the breeding of horses.—B.

Admiral, increased by the displeasure produced by these delays, and the inclemency of the weather, did not allow him to avail himself then of it. He passed the Lent in Seville, unable to use his limbs. Notwithstanding his sufferings, he diminished in nothing his austerities, observed strictly the Lenten Fast, and followed with exactness the rule of the Seraphic Order.

At length the genial influences of spring ameliorated his condition. In the course of May, supported by his brother, the Adelantado, and mounted on a mule, he took the route to Segovia, where the Court then remained. Still, such were his sufferings that he fell sick anew in Salamanca. After some other delays, occasioned by the severity of his sufferings, he at length came to the end of his journey.

The King welcomed him with his usual politeness, to which he added an air of graciousness and satisfaction; but did not give him his title of Viceroy, or treat him according to his rank, as he had done during the lifetime of the Queen. He listened with patience to the recital of the perilous voyage, and with interest to the account of the mines of Veragua. He let the Admiral recount the shipwreck at Jamaica, the abandonment to which the Governor of Hispaniola had delivered him, the revolt of Porras, the affronts received in San Domingo, without giving him any other consolation than those vaguely polite words with which the experience of Columbus could no longer be deceived. Protesting the interest he felt in his regard, and acknowledging the titles, as old as they were incontestible, of the Admiral to the gratitude of the Crown, the King contrived to terminate the audience without deciding, or even promising anything.

Columbus, after having allowed some days to pass, considered it his duty to recall to the remembrance of the King the services he had rendered. Ferdinand replied to him in a very polite manner, which could not be forgotten. Still, the coldness of his accents counterbalancing the kindness of his words, his airs of a monarch, taken designedly

to maintain him in a circumspect reserve, and to prevent every direct question that would have led to a frank reply, showed the real disposition of the King. He spoke particularly to the Admiral about his gout and his rheumatism, recommended to him, above all, to take good care of himself, mentioning the medicines proper for him to take, and then, with a gracious nod, gave him leave to withdraw.

If such a manner of treating as an imbecile old man the Revealer of the Globe seemed to Ferdinand a clever piece of dexterity, what it partook of the cruel must have deeply revolted the heart of Columbus. For some days he remained in his retreat, offering to God these secret outrages; then he essayed to put before the eyes of the King, in a few lines, the object of his reclamation.

In his letter, far from feeling embarrassed at the listlessness, almost disdainful, which the Court manifested towards him, the Admiral, who always avoided recalling the superhuman character of his Discovery, and the favors with which the Lord had privileged him, this time speaks loudly and strongly to his earthly Sovereign. He calls by their proper names things which some people would fain ignore. The memory of prodigies effected, the consciousness that his rights have been violated, and the sentiment of revolted justice, impress on his style a vigor which cannot be rendered in the translation. This letter thus commences:

“MOST PUISSANT KING: —

“Our Lord God sent me miraculously here to serve your Highnesses. I say miraculously, because I went to present my enterprise to Portugal, whose King had extended discoveries more than any other had done, and that he had his sight and hearing and all his other faculties obscured to that point, that during fourteen years he could not comprehend what I exposed to him. I say also miraculously, because I received urgent entreaties by letter from three

princes, which the Queen (God be with her) saw, and which were read by Doctor Villalon," etc.

The Admiral added that from the greatness of his services, and the advantages which must result from them, everybody thought His Highness would honor him, and would show him his good-will by deeds, and that in this he would only fulfil what had already been promised him verbally, what had been engaged to him by writing, under his signature.

The King replied that he well saw the advantages which must result from the Indies, and that he merited all the favors that had been granted him. Still, as his demand was of a complex character, since there were at the same time questions of titles, of government, of pecuniary rights, of accounts to be settled, of arrears to be paid up, — in a word, of things almost litigious, — it would be meet to choose as an umpire a man capable of this kind of arbitration. The Admiral accepted this proposition, and besought the King to refer the matter to the new Archbishop of Seville, Don Diego de Deza. Ferdinand agreed to this. The Admiral specified expressly the question he intended for settlement: it was solely that which concerned his revenues, the amount of claims on articles exported from the Indies, and on those that were imported there. As to his titles, and the government of the Indies, he did not admit that they could be called in question, his right to them being too clearly written down. It appears the archbishop did not act in this matter; either because he thought his friendship for Columbus would make him somewhat of a party in this affair, or because his modesty prevented him pronouncing as umpire between his Sovereign and the Viceroy of the Indies, he declined the task.*

* It is more probable that the matter was not really submitted to the archbishop at all. At least such appears to be the view of Mr. Washington Irving. — B.

At length, Columbus seeing that his representations were without force, since he had not the power of making them effectual, offered to leave the matter in dispute to the generosity of the King himself. He told him, in order to avoid the tardiness of litigation, to fix himself the amount that was due to him, because he was worn down from labors and infirmities, and he longed to see this matter terminated, in order to be able to retire to some corner and die there in peace.

The King graciously replied that he did not wish to deprive himself yet of his services; that he was determined to satisfy him in every respect, that he could not forget that they owed the Indies to him, and that he intended to accord him not only what belonged to him legally in virtue of his privileges, but also to recompense him with the riches belonging to the Crown.

After assurances so formal, to utter a doubt would have been an offence. It was necessary to be silent and wait. Besides, if the grandees had forsaken him, there yet remained to him his old friend Diego de Deza. Columbus was also held in high consideration, and beloved by the illustrious Cardinal Ximenes, Archbishop of Toledo. He retained a ray of hope, for at times he allowed himself to be beguiled by the insincere words of Ferdinand. His own uprightness was such that he did not believe others capable of dissimulation so long continued, nor of such a contempt for the most sacred rights.

As it was especially the Queen who had made engagements to the Admiral, it appeared proper to submit his reclamations to the Junta de Descaigos, a council or tribunal instituted to watch over and superintend the execution of the intentions and testamentary obligations of the Sovereigns of Spain. The Council took the matter regularly into hand. It spent much time in examining the documents, in discussing them, and in deliberating on them; but still without coming to any decision. One would have said that it excepted to its own competency. A high influence

seemed to paralyze it. In Segovia the same spirit was manifested that animated the coterie of Seville.

At the end of a certain time he obtained that the Council referred to should resume the consideration of his case; but it was only to recommence delays. The Court was much divided in regard to this reclamation. In their righteousness, Cardinal Ximenes and the Archbishop of Seville did not admit that one could dispense himself from giving Columbus what had been promised him. The authority of these two eminent prelates ranged on their side all who feared God. But around the King the courtiers, who were so by blood, were in the majority; for them, reasons of state overruled every private consideration of conscience or of engagement. The interest of the state, said they, is opposed to the execution of the treaty of the seventeenth of April, 1492, notwithstanding its ratifications; the recompense demanded is too much above the services rendered; it is not politic to make an individual, and especially a foreigner, so powerful.

The Council made no decision. Evidently the secret intervention of the King was the cause of its having made none.

The Admiral, being no longer able to sustain in Segovia the expenses which his rank required, removed to Valladolid, where the Court made only a short stay. But in order that his tribulations may reach their height, sickness came to add to the tortures of the gout, with which he was "racked without mercy."

Then Ferdinand, who, without seeming to pay any attention to them, watched the declining strength and the pecuniary embarrassments of the Admiral, judging the moment opportune, proposed to him to renounce his privileges, and to accept in exchange for them a demesne situated in Castile, the fief of Carrion de los Condes, to which would be added a pension from the exchequer of the Crown. The Admiral rejected with disdain this offer, by which it was intended to take advantage of his helplessness. As inflex-

ible in his destitution and infirmities as at the time when strong only in hope, in the plain of Granada, he obliged the Court to consent to his demands: he yielded nothing, diminished in nothing his disregarded rights, and kept the silence of indignation, limiting himself to appealing to God against this iniquity.

We will not weary our readers with details of his pecuniary embarrassments, nay, his very destitution, bordering on absolute want. In this respect, and from the same causes, he was nearly in the same condition he was in previous to his fourth voyage of discovery. Neither will we detail the many other fruitless efforts he made, ably seconded by his son Diego, to regain his titles and his government, either for himself or for his son. Ferdinand could not, in fact, be moved.

Following in the wake of a certain school, the majority of the biographers of Columbus blindly repeat that the Admiral died without his having any suspicion of the importance of his discoveries, and that to the end of his life he took, or rather mistook, the New Continent for the Asiatic coast.

This is a complete error. It must be remembered that Columbus gave the name of *Indies* to the lands he discovered, in order to interest the Court in them, because at that time the Indies were considered the richest country in the world for spices, pearls, gold, and diamonds. It ought also to be added, that the Admiral, since his third voyage, pointed out a country of which there never before had been any mention made.

The logic of facts is more convincing than that of historians. It outweighs all their subtle conclusions.

We have said, and we repeat it, that since his third voyage Columbus knew that the New Continent was not Asia. We can affirm that he knew the ocean surrounded with its waters this new continent; for before undertaking his fourth expedition he talked of finding a strait, a passage which

would have conducted him to the ocean on the other side of the Isthmus of Panama.

This is a positive fact, established by the words of Columbus himself, the testimony of his enemies, and the unanimity of the writers of his time. In Granada, under the ogives of the Alhambra, the Admiral announced the existence of the ocean on the other side of the New Continent. If in his letter of the seventh of July, 1503, he speaks of Ciguare, and of the Ganges, he only conforms to the ideas then generally admitted, and without which he could not have been understood; but he did not believe that he found Asia. And even when he is obliged to use the name of *Indies*, through prudence or through modesty, not daring, or being unwilling, to form one himself, to impose on a land so vast, he knows well that God has delivered to him a soil that was totally unknown to the ancient world.

Columbus has so exact an idea of his discovery, he is so fully convinced that this new continent is not Asia, that he indicates how the sea confines it; he traces the geographical position of Veragua, in regard to the opposite lands on the other side of the ocean, and says that they are found situated as Tortosa is in regard to Fontarabia, and Pisa in regard to Venice.

If, for a certain time, Columbus really believed that he had arrived at the Indies, his last expeditions rectified and fixed his ideas in regard to the importance of his discoveries. He had no more doubts after his fourth voyage. He then clearly saw the immensity of his discoveries; he was then fully conscious of the enormity of the royal injustice, and felt that never was there a more flagrant iniquity committed against a man. By the apostolic donation of the Holy See, and the papal line of demarcation, of which he was the secret cause, he had assured to Castile one-half of this globe; and still he was refused his rights, his titles, his honors, his bread! He possessed in the world only his revenues, and they were not forthcoming. It was to the friendship or the commiseration of some Genoese, that

he owed the means of being able to live wretchedly, by borrowing.

He saw disappearing indefinitely the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre, — the ardent desire of his whole life, — at a time when everything seemed ready for its realization. Gold now abounded, and every new arrival promised for the next season greater riches; but there was nothing for Columbus! * What must he not have felt in his heart? Still no complaint was heard from him. Confining in the depth of his loneliness the bitterness of his sorrows, he offered them to Him who had borne the Cross. This calm in the height of affliction, does it not reveal something else besides virtue? Can we find in history an example similar to it? Philosophy is as incapable of inspiring as it is of explaining this sublime resignation. It was because the Messenger of Salvation held the crucifix before his eyes. He remembered that our Divine Lord, coming to bring to poor humanity more than a world, and more than all the worlds, — the Truth, the Way, and the Life, — was calumniated, persecuted, bound with cords, scourged, given as a spectacle to the crowd, and delivered to death, notwithstanding His declared innocence. Like Him, the Revealer of the Globe remained silent; and, like Him, he pardoned his enemies.

* Some writers of a certain school look upon the idea of Columbus, in regard to the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre, as visionary. Now we maintain that it was, on the contrary, perfectly practicable, and that Columbus had provided, or at least discovered, all the means for making it an accomplished fact. Had the selfish King Ferdinand, and the worldly-minded Fonseca, seconded, in place of thwarting, as they did, the plans and endeavors of Columbus, there can be no doubt that the glorious idea would have been realized. No — Columbus was no visionary. — B.

CHAPTER IX.

His Disease becomes worse. — He sees his End is approaching. — He deposits his Will in the Hands of the Notary of the Court. — Errors of Historians and Biographers in regard to the Date of this Will, and of the Order relative to Doña Beatrix Enriquez. — He receives the last Sacraments. — His last Words. — He dies on Ascension-Day. — Posthumous Voyages of Columbus.

SECTION I.

AFTER the death of the Queen, the strength of Columbus declined gradually. The energy of his powerful organization, exhausted by long toils, and enfeebled by sufferings, being no longer sustained by the presence of Isabella, soon gave way. The strength of his will alone retarded a dissolution which appeared imminent.

In addition to his other sufferings, an old wound he had once received reopened; some gouty swellings plagued his hands and feet, and his disease gained on the principal centres of life.

In his atrocious calculation in regard to the time Columbus had to suffer, Ferdinand showed an exact penetration; but there was a secret of suffering deep in the heart of Columbus which this astute politician could not fathom. It was this:

Notwithstanding his perfect resignation to the will of God, and his pardon of the iniquities committed against him, a desolation more bitter than the ingratitude of the King afflicted him incessantly in his solitude: it was the remembrance of those countries he went to discover in the name of Jesus Christ; the wrecked images of those popu-

lations, formerly so happy, to whom he was the first to show the Cross, to be saluted by them, and who were now ruined by an insensate barbarity. The Revealer of the New World felt himself martyred in the Indians, dismembered in the dispersion of their tribes, and the punishments inflicted on these unhappy people, who expired cursing the sublime religion which he ardently wished them to embrace and cherish.

In the midst of his physical torments, and of the humiliating embarrassments of his state of destitution, Columbus, commending the fate of his two sons to the bounty of Providence, could yet have forgotten his distress and humiliation, and the perfidy of the monarch; but no human preoccupation could take away the recollection of these unfortunate Indians, or diminish his indignation at the treatment they received. By what words could such an affliction be consoled? How moderate the grief which penetrated the disciple of the Word to the very core, and mitigate his moral agony?—a grief as wide-spread as a whole nation, and multiple as the populations of that unfortunate race, whose end he foresaw, and whose lamentations he seemed to hear?

He soon saw that no human aid could arrest the decay of a body worn out in all of its organization. He re-read, for the last time, his will; and, finding in it nothing to change, desired to make an authentic deposit of it in trusty hands.

Duty obliges us to pause for a little time before this last act of his, which has served as an occasion for the most rash accusations against the moral purity of this great servant of God.

Washington Irving pretends that “on the eve of his death he executed a final and regularly authenticated codicil.” This author adds, A clause of this will “recommends to the care of Don Diego, Beatrix Enriquez, the mother of his natural son Fernando. His connection with her was never sanctioned by matrimony, and either this circum-

stance, or some neglect of her, seems to have awakened deep compunction in his dying moments."*

Ever since it was broached by Napione, developed with acrimony by Spotorno, commented on by Navarrete, Irving, and Humboldt,† and followed by the whole Protestant school, none of the biographers of Columbus have hitherto failed to reproduce pointedly this assertion of the regrets the remembrance of Beatriz Enriquez excited in the Admiral during his last moments, and to point out, as a proof of his "deep compunction," his last codicil, executed "on the eve of his death"; that is to say, the nineteenth of May, 1506.

We will no longer allow the Revealer of the Globe to be calumniated, even to his very agony. It is time to put an end to this falsification of facts, arising from an audacious transposition of dates.

We declare, then, formally, that this "deep compunction" of Columbus in his last moments is a pure fiction.

We further assert that Columbus made no testamentary disposition "on the eve of his death."

We positively declare that the "final and regularly authenticated codicil" which it is pretended was made "on the eve of his death," and, consequently, on the nineteenth of May, 1506, dated already more than four years prior to this time!

The last codicil of Columbus, — "a document written by his own hand, dated the first of April, 1502," and deposited in the cell of the Rev. F. Gaspar Gorricio, of the Carthusian monastery of Des Grottes, prior to the departure of the Admiral on his last voyage, — was, after his return, confirmed in its tenor. He declares this himself. In proof of his constant desire, Columbus reproduced it with his own hand the twenty-fifth of August, 1505. Feeling his end approaching, the Admiral wished to invest it with a

* *Life and Voyages of Columbus*, Book XVIII., chap. iv.

† See Introduction, secs. iv. and v. — B.

character of authenticity, by depositing it, in a legal form, in the hands of the notary of the Court, Pedro de Hinojedo, and to name as his executors his son Diego, his brother Bartholomew, and Juan de Porras, the Treasurer-General of Biscay; which he did on the nineteenth of May, 1506.*

To arrive at the true sense of the words of Columbus, in relation to Beatrix Enriquez, the rectification of this date is indispensable, because the interval which separates the date of the will from the act of its deposition renders inadmissible the injurious interpretation given to regrets expressed by the Admiral.

Now after having reëstablished the dates in their proper order, let us reproduce the facts in their place, and restore the words to their true sense.

In his last codicil of the first of April, 1502, recopied by his own hand the twenty-fifth of August, 1505, and deposited in legal form only on the nineteenth of May, 1506, Columbus was occupied with the condition of his consort, Beatrix Enriquez, who was always in rather straitened circumstances. But far from feeling any remorse on account of her, as has been said, his remembrance of her only reveals to us his delicacy of soul.

Our readers will remember the circumstances under which the marriage of Columbus with this Cordovan lady took place. Soon after his marriage he left Cordova, and scarcely ever returned there; at least he did not sojourn there. It was because he did not belong to himself; he owed himself to the work of Providence. The service of the Sovereigns which he here turned to the glory of God, and to the increase of the Church, retained him continually. He sacrificed pitilessly his domestic happiness to the interests of the Globe. In the same manner as the Apostles separated from their wives and children to go and spread the Good News among the nations of the earth, Christopher

* *Testamento y Codicilo del Almirante Cristobal Colon en Valladolid, a 19 de Mayo, de 1506.* — Col. Diplom. Docum., num. CLVIII.

Columbus, disengaging himself from the restraints of domestic happiness, abandoned the felicity he had promised himself, in order to labor solely for the increase of our domain, to discover the totality of the terrestrial creation, to carry the sign of Redemption to unknown peoples, to prepare ways for the Gospel, and, in fine, with the proceeds of his toils, to redeem the Sepulchre of the Redeemer.

Still, at the time of undertaking his last expedition of discovery, the boldest and the most dangerous of all his voyages, while he was writing his testamentary dispositions, coming to recollect the long-continued sacrifices and the silent devotedness of Beatrix, the abandonment in which he left her so many years, and calling to mind that he forgot assigning her a dowry in his act of mayorazgo, Columbus conceived a profound regret,—a scruple of heart. He feared that he would appear to be ungrateful, and to have really too much neglected her who had devoted herself to him and for him, in the hour of his tribulations, and whose ingenuous tenderness took delight in calming the anguish of his incertitude, and in disguising from him the state of her comparative destitution; he was afraid of not having sufficiently accorded or reconciled the attentions due to his consort with the exigencies due to the service of God.

Being no longer able to modify, as to the basis of it, his institution of mayorazgo, known by the Sovereigns and by the Holy See, in favor of the noble Beatrix, who demanded nothing and wished for nothing, and whose silence and resignation equalled the devotedness of her first love, he was obliged to limit himself to recommending her to his universal heir, in terms which would render doubly obligatory his testamentary Will. “It was,” he said, “for the ease of his conscience.” He recalls, in two words, how much he is indebted to her. And as he did not judge it becoming to mention, in this last act of his Will, why this obligation was a weight on his heart, he considered it sufficient to say,—“It is not expedient to mention here the reason.”

In these words solely, Napione, Spotorno, and Navarrete, equally strangers to the real history of Columbus, and to a knowledge of the human heart, believed they found proof of an illicit connection. They referred his regrets to an irregular position towards Beatrix Enriquez. Washington Irving, not daring to contradict them, has almost ranged himself with them, though with evident hesitation.

The absurdity of such an interpretation is truly astonishing.

What! If the cause of the recommendation he made, — that reason which he did not judge it expedient to mention, — had been an illicit connection, would he have recalled the fact or circumstance that Beatrix Enriquez was the mother of Don Fernando? When he mentioned the maternity of Beatrix, could he have concealed anything regarding the nature of their connection? Evidently the modest reserve of the Admiral could not concern this maternity, which he avowed so clearly. Mysteriousness becomes impossible after such clearness of expression. The reticence, then, of the testator, was not in regard to the birth of his second son.

The same writers who have seen in these words the avowal of a fault wrung from his conscience at the awful moment of bidding adieu to life, have forgotten the date of this will. They have confounded the drawing up of this document with the act of its deposition, which was done by the Admiral four years later, on the eve of his death. From some words, the meaning of which their disregard for this great character prevented them from seizing, they have inferred the existence of an illicit connection, and of a barren remorse towards the last moments. The difference of dates did not make them hesitate. We will not refute their assertions here, or notice their blind obstinacy. Referring our readers to the proofs we have given in the Introduction,* it will suffice to say that the marriage of

* Sections IV. and V.

Columbus, demonstrated by so many logical inductions, by divers documents and proofs, recognized by his descendants, the genealogical trees, and the traditions of his relatives, was avowed by himself, with his own hand, five years, four months, and twenty-eight days before the act of deposition made "on the eve of his death" in an autographic document which, happily, has been preserved to us. He calls this lady his *wife*, — this lady from whom his mission kept him always so long separated. He mentions the cause of this heroic separation.

And even in the will, the article invoked against Beatrix Enriquez presents a proof of the legitimacy of his son. If Doña Beatrix was not the legitimate wife of the Admiral, would he not have put her pension in the charge of his son Fernando, — the heir of a million and a half? Would it not have been natural to impose this obligation on Beatrix's own son, in place of transferring it to the son of another bed? But Columbus left it expressly to Don Diego, in his quality of first-born, because the pension of the widow of the Admiral of the Indies was to be paid by his successor in the Admiralty, — the continuator of his titles and privileges. Let us be pardoned for the length of this last answer to the last calumny of the last historians of Columbus, and remark, in passing, that such an accusation never came into the minds of his persecutors neither during his life nor during the existence of his direct line. The spirit of false criticism, and of a vain erudition, has invented it in our own days.

To judge, up to the last moment, of the character of Columbus, this Will is of great importance. The dates in it are not less significative than the expressions themselves. The dates attest the invariable fixity of the determination of the testator. What he had written in 1501, prior to his last expedition, he confirms in 1505. What he wrote at the latter time he sanctions anew in 1506, by the act of deposition made "on the eve of his death." By his unchangeableness of intention we see his constancy of will, and that

precision of reason which was the cause of it, and which formed the basis of his energy of character.

This consecration of his last wishes, effected thus in solemn circumstances before the notary-royal, comes, in justifying it, to authorize what we have said in a manner somewhat peremptory concerning the sublime candor and loving disposition of Columbus. It is appropriately that we have spoken of him as raised by Providence, inflamed with zeal for the glory of the divine Word, and submitting his science to his faith, as he did his genius to humility.

Men never become hypocrites on the bed of death ; they do not dissimulate on the threshold of eternity. Now, by the act of deposition made "on the eve of his death," Columbus declared, for the last time, the superhuman character of his Discovery. He reiterated, in the face of the tomb, what the ingratitude of the Court had forced him to write to the King and to his counsellors : "By the will of our Lord God I have given to the King and the Queen the Indies, as a thing that was mine ; I may say it because . . ." He mentions further, in this solemn moment, the famous Line of Demarcation running from one pole to the other ; not the deceitful and fallacious boundary agreed on diplomatically between the Crowns of Castile and of Portugal, upon which he always remained silent through respect, of which, however, he seems to have made no account, and which he never mentioned, regarding it, perhaps, as an offence towards the Holy See, — but that astonishing Line which was drawn at a hundred leagues from the Azores and Cape de Verd Islands, by the Sovereign Pontiff, assisted by the Sacred College, and which will always remain, even for incredulity, as one of the greatest prodigies of the human mind, and as a testimony of the indefectible inspiration of the Papacy.

SECTION II.

When he had heard the reading of this act of his, — his last will, — and the witnesses, as well as the notary, had signed it, Columbus asked for a writing-pen.

Already, by his verbal recommendations made to his eldest son, he had provided for the interests of his faithful servitors. Formerly he had promised to the heroic Diego Mendez the commissariate-general of the police of Hispaniola; Carvajal and Geronomo were confided to the kindness of his heir. But in his last moments his gratitude would leave souvenirs to some estimable persons whose obligingness he had experienced during the first years of his stay in Portugal. As several of them had ceased to live, he extended to their children and heirs this proof of his affectionate remembrance. He added a note to his Will, with his own hand, mentioning the persons, and the small legacies he wished to leave them. Among these was a poor Jew, who lived near the gate of the Jewry, in Lisbon, to whom he bequeathed half a mark of silver.

Moreover, through a generous delicacy, he desired that these bequests should be faithfully discharged and forwarded to the legatees, without their knowing by what title, or whence came the godsend.

After he had consigned to the notary the last act of his wishes, Columbus turned his thoughts wholly from earthly things and the concerns of his family, in order to converse no longer but with Heaven.

Few details have been transmitted to us about the last moments of this existence, without equal among the sons of men. The learned canon of Plaisance, Pietro Maria Campi, had collected on the closing scenes of this Christian hero exact notions, which he intended for publication, when, with a rude visit, death came to interrupt his labors. From what he had been able to procure concerning the last moments of the Revealer of the Globe, he inferred that his

death was that of one of the elect, — the worthy end of an apostle and a martyr.*

Nevertheless, in the absence of documentary details concerning the last phase of this luminous star in the sphere of intelligences, it is still possible to trace sufficiently exact its most striking circumstances.

We can imagine what a hotel must have been at that period in Spain. It is easy to represent to ourselves that chamber in which the Admiral of the Ocean lay on his bed of sufferings. The bare walls had as ornaments only his chains, which he always kept suspended before him in his study, as formerly the generals of Rome, who were conquerors, preserved the civic and mural crowns obtained as the reward of their courage. His chains were the only recompense he had received from the world. There he, who had received so many divine favors, whom God had raised to remove the veil which hid from humanity one-half of the globe, lay, forgotten by the great ones of the world, and the people, a prey to the dissolution by which the decomposition of our mortal coils is effected. Nevertheless, amid the approaches of death, his lucidity of mind subsisted still, and his thoughts remained as clear and perspicacious as they were in the times of his discoveries.

Conformably to the usage of the time, and the particular inclination of his piety, he put on the habit of the Third Order of St. Francis, which he so often wore, — a costume in which the great Isabella rendered back to God the soul she had received from Him. His two sons, his officers, some Franciscan fathers, and some friends, by turns saddened and comforted by the words of the ardent disciple of the Eternal Word, assisted at the last struggle of his robust constitution against dissolution. He himself contemplated with attention its rapid progress. Having finished his edifying exhortations, he desired, for the last time, by the Sacrament of Penance, of putting himself in the way of receiving his

*Pietro Maria Campi. *Dell' Historia Ecclesiastica di Piacenza.*

God. No pride taken in his works, no looming of vanity taken in his glory, by an intrusive temptation, came to trouble the recollectedness of his last hour. The humility of the habit of St. Francis truly enrobed his heart.

He saw there before his eyes, suspended from the bare wall of his apartment, his chains, — the only recompense he had really received for his superhuman labors. Fearing, perhaps, that the sight of them may secretly embitter the hearts of his children against the injustice of the Court, in order to conceal this image of regal ingratitude he ordered that these chains should descend with him into the tomb. After having given himself this proof of the sincerity of his pardon of the offences committed against him, he made a last confession, and received absolution.

The day had come which is one of the great festivals of Catholicity, — the anniversary of that on which the Son of God, after having accomplished our redemption, and founded His Church, ascended to His Father, to reënter into His glory. Hourly the Grand Admiral of the Ocean felt himself advancing to the port that opens to eternity. He asked for the favor of receiving once more on earth the bread of angels. What a spectacle was then presented in that chamber of the hotel! The envoy of the Most High, the ardent adorer of the Word by whom all things were made, receiving the visit of the Divine Word, under the Eucharistic symbol! What divine light must not have illumined his bed of sufferings! With what happiness must he not have prostrated himself before his Divine Master, who came to him! The Divine Redeemer, who reads souls, knew with what ardor he had desired the deliverance of His tomb, and the glorification of His Name among the nations of the earth, and his persevering and pious aspirations for attaining these sacred objects. So, notwithstanding the awe which every mortal creature must feel before the majesty of the Author of Life, Christopher was filled with hope.

A moment more and he enters on the possession of eternal life.

The integrity of his intellectual faculties remained complete throughout. When he felt his end quite close, he emerged from his seraphic recollectedness, and asked for the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. He was able to join in the prayers that were said for him. He listened, with humble contrition, to the recommendation of a departing soul, which was made at his bedside by one of the Franciscan religious; he gave the responses himself. Then, feeling that his last moment had come, at the hour of noon, the disciple of the Word addressed to the Father of the Worlds the same words that were uttered by the Saviour, when expiring on the Cross: *In manus tuas Domine commendo spiritum meum* ("Into Thy hands, oh Lord, I commend my spirit").

This was on Ascension-Day, the twentieth of May, 1506.

SECTION III.

As in the times of the persecutions of the Church the martyrs were buried with vials filled with their blood, and with the images of the instruments of their tortures, the chains with which ingratitude charged the feet and hands of Columbus were enclosed in his coffin. Afterwards the Franciscans accompanied his corpse to the cathedral-church of Valladolid, where the obsequies of the Admiral of the Indies were celebrated with little pomp; after which these religious transported his mortal remains to the vaults of their Convent of the Observance. Columbus, who first found an asylum among the Franciscans, received from them his last hospitality.

Amid the intrigues and the parties dividing the Court, the name of Christopher Columbus remained forgotten. In an order given by the King, on the second of June, 1506, fourteen days after the death of the Admiral, to send to his son Don Diego the gold and the objects that belonged to his father, not a single one of those expressions is found that common decency would have suggested.

The death of Columbus made so little noise, that in the following years some works published abroad spoke of him as being still living. But Rome watched over his glory; the Papacy preserved from forgetfulness the name of the Revealer of the Globe.

Seven years had passed without his name being completely forgotten. The more discoveries were extended, the more the importance that was attached to the work of Columbus.

Knowing that neither prejudices, nor calumnies, nor injustice, could avail anything against the immortality of his work, old Ferdinand, — desiring, perhaps, to appease the inward accusation of his conscience, or may be to deceive public opinion, efface the remembrance of his injustice towards the hero, and acquire the name of a monarch who was just and grateful, — ordered that pompous obsequies, at the expense of the Crown, should be made for the Grand Admiral of the Ocean; and that Castile should concede, gratis, two metres of land to the man who had given her half the globe.

Accordingly, in the year 1513, the funereal solitude of Columbus was suddenly disturbed. By a royal order, his coffin was taken from the convent of the Franciscans of the Observance at Valladolid, and transported, with great pomp, to Seville. A solemn service took place in the cathedral. After the absolution, his friends, the Carthusians, bore the coffin of the Admiral to the other side of the Guadalquiver, to their peaceable retreat of *Santa Maria de las Grutas* (St. Mary of the Grottos). There it was deposited, not among the lords of Alcala, as has been erroneously stated by the annalist of Seville, but in a sepulchre entirely new, in a vault under the Chapel of Christ.

In the peace of this cloister he remained asleep in the Lord until 1526, when the hammer that troubled the repose of his sepulture at Valladolid, resounded in his vault. By his side were placed the mortal remains of Don Diego, his

successor. Those who had slowly put to death the father had also succeeded in getting rid of the son.

After an oblivion of ten years the two coffins were again disturbed. The remains of Columbus, taken from the silence of the Carthusian cloister, were taken on board a caravel. Thus the man who had first crossed the ocean, inflamed with pious hopes, was also the first who was to cross it after his death. He returned with his chains to the city in which he had been loaded with them.

In the year 1536 the body of Columbus was transported from Castile to San Domingo, — that city which was founded by his orders, and to which he had given as a coat-of-arms, besides the Lion and the Tower of Isabella, the Cross and the Key, the emblems of Catholicity. It was deposited in a recess in the sanctuary of the cathedral, to the right of the main altar.

A treaty of peace concluded between France and Spain, in 1795, having assured to the former of these powers the definite possession of Hispaniola, the government of Spain did not wish to abandon this glorious relic to the new possessors of the island.

In the month of December the remains of the Admiral were exhumed in San Domingo, and taken on board the brigantine, the *Discovery*, to be transported to the island of Cuba. On this occasion the display of military pomp and religious ceremonies was extraordinary. One would have said it was the triumphal march of the relics of a saint.

His remains were taken by the *Discovery* to Ochao, whence the *San Lorenzo* conveyed them to Cuba, where they arrived on the sixteenth of January following, and where new military and religious honors awaited them. Here they were deposited near the grand altar of the cathedral, to the right of the sanctuary, in the presence of all the notables of the island, and with sentiments of religious respect.

Let us not be deceived :

These military and religious exhibitions, these unusual gatherings, this pious earnestness of troops of the army and navy, and of the civil and ecclesiastical corporations, were less a testimony rendered to the Discovery of these countries than a homage offered to the memory of the Christian hero who, "after having first discovered this island was the first to raise the standard of the Cross in it, and to spread among the natives the Faith of Jesus Christ."

By these successive exhumations and transportations we see that the vicissitudes of the fortune of Columbus, and the fluctuations of his destiny, were not terminated by death. As on four different occasions he had sought from the Franciscan family an asylum, so he had made four voyages of discovery, and so, also, his remains were sent four times to find a definite place of sepulture. Would we not say that the wonderful survived him beyond the tomb, as if he were not to resemble the rest of mortals even in death!

CHAPTER X.

The Private Life of Columbus.—His Public Life a Model for Administrators.—Providential Character of Columbus.—His Christian Mission and Relations with the Church.—His Spiritual Affinities.—The Legend of St. Christopher.—His Affinities with the Patriarchs, the Prophets, and the Apostles.—Similitude of Moses and Columbus.—Of the Sanctity of Columbus.—Testimonies of the Most High in favor of His Servant.—Public Miracles of a Cross that was erected by Columbus.

SECTION I.

HITHERTO, without stopping for the philosophical examination of the facts accomplished by Columbus, we have simply recounted, in abridging them, the principal events of his life. We will now take a look at the *ensemble* of this vast existence which we have been obliged to sketch so briefly.

It is in vain that we would apply to Columbus the recent principles of the pure rationalist school in relation to its philosophy of history, or that we would confine our appreciations within the systematic rules of modern biography, equally inspired by its influences.

The life of Columbus is the complete overthrow of these pedantic principles, imperiously imposed by the pure rationalist school on those writers who consider themselves philosophers merely because they are heavy, deprived of spirit, and always proceed by way of negation, never affirming anything positively, and devoted to perpetual doubt. The real history of the discoverer of the New World cannot lessen itself so as to keep within this philosophical system of biography, — a true Procrustes' bed, — to the

measure of which it requires all human actions to be reduced, even were it at the cost of the most ruthless mutilations of truth, and the dislocation of the best established events of history.

We cannot admit the opinion of Navarrete based on this theory, when judging of Columbus he says: "His faults were the part of nature and of human frailty, and probably the result of the education he had received, of the career he embraced, and of the country in which he was born, — a country in which traffic and merchandizing formed the principal branch of riches, both public and private." We do not believe in this original transmission of the qualities or the vices of a nation to the individuals who compose it; because then every member of the aggregation would be equally stamped with the same character and the same predispositions. Experience gives a flat contradiction to this absurdity, which would give itself the airs of knowledge and superiority. No disposition for traffic or for speculating shows itself in the administrative acts of Columbus.

Neither do we accept of the opinion of Washington Irving, based on the same system: * "Great men are compounds of great and little qualities. Indeed, much of their greatness arises from their mastery over the imperfections of their nature, and their noblest actions are sometimes struck forth by the collision of their merits and their defects." †

According to this system, the life of a saint could never be written, especially if he was a man of genius, and he

* Washington Irving. *History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, Book XVIII., chap. v.

† That is to say, in other terms, that their indolence creates energy; their cowardice, bravery! How will the collision of qualities opposed to noble actions, and which, therefore, ought to produce only vices, attain to virtue, to grandeur, to the sublime? This is what we challenge every man in existence to explain. See, now, to what a height, or rather depth of absurdity, this modern system of biography leads.

thought and acted in critical circumstances, and in an elevated position ; for he must necessarily have weaknesses and show defects, since it is absolutely necessary that a man, because he is man, should exhibit a compound of virtues and of weaknesses. This school of the philosophy of history does not admit that a man is ever different from others, as regards the basis of his character, which is equally composed of virtues and of foibles ; only his qualities, both good and bad, are respectively more pronounced according to the traits which distinguish his individuality. So, not being able, on human principles, to explain the sublimity of the language of Columbus in his vision on the coast of Veragua, astonished at the diction of the old navigator, rather than recognize the grandeur of his Christian soul, Humboldt dares to advance the strange opinion which he thus expresses : “ The eloquence of uncultivated minds, cast in the midst of an advanced civilization, is like the eloquence of the primitive times. When we observe superior men of a strong stamp of character, and but little familiar with the riches of the language they use, in one of those impassioned flights which, by their very wildness, are opposed to the exercise of thought, we find in them that poetic coloring of sentiment which appertains to the eloquence of the primitive ages.” * Whence it logically follows, that any man of a strong stamp of character, and but little familiar with the Spanish language, could, in a similar case, have used the sublime language of Columbus !

The most recent work published in France on Christopher Columbus, contains the proof of this systematic mode of appreciating men. In a Notice amply developed and remarkable for erudition, the learned editor (*directeur*) of the *Nouvelle Biographie General*, Doctor Hoefer, says : “ Great geniuses, like other mortals, derive above all things from the man and from the epoch.” It is the historians who, judging the past through the prism of the present, that give

* Humboldt. *Examen Critique*, etc., t. III., p. 240.

us false ideas. It is thus that they represent Columbus as inspired by glory to serve humanity, whilst such an ambition never came into his mind, no more than to Guttenberg, his cotemporary, who, with Schæffer and Faust, sold as manuscripts the first books that were printed.

“Columbus, before crossing the Ocean, had, at first, taken care to stipulate for himself and his heirs conditions truly princely : see the man. He afterwards had at heart to carry the Catholic faith to the antipodes, and to wrest the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of the infidels : see the epoch.”

According to this principle, the personality of Columbus would be reduced to the reproduction of the general ideas of his time. He would be only the incarnation of the dominant thought of his epoch.

The authority of facts, and the impartiality of history, as well as the doctrine of Catholicity, reduce this theory to nothing. The history of the Church, in every page, disproves these assertions and pretensions. Undoubtedly no man can altogether escape from all the influences of the dominant ideas of his time, and in the midst of which he lives. He cannot continually assimilate the true when he respires only the false, or show himself great if he was never in contact but with littleness. But the grace of God, that invisible force which leads men, notwithstanding their wavering, operates on certain souls, and seems to modify human nature. The man thus assisted becomes then master of things to which he seems not to have been destined naturally, and of which his education, his acquired science, his keenness of intellect, would not have rendered him capable. The sole sublimity of St. John, a man without education or letters, upsets from its base the modern system of the philosophy of history.

What of the Jewish or of the Roman ideas of his epoch does one find in St. John, the Son of Light, the declarer of the WORD, and His well-beloved disciple? To what age of literature appertain his collaborators, the writers of the Gospel, — a work without a known type as without a pos-

sible imitation, without relationship with the productions of the languages of antiquity, or the traditions of the learned Orient, and still accessible to all, and marvellous to everybody!

The rationalist school, proceeding according to its theory on the philosophy of history, cannot explain the Gospel. It will no more explain its propagators, — the apostles and martyrs. The history of the Church, which presents us with eighteen centuries of observation, of experience, of active and beneficent life, has, it seems to us, the right to count for something in this world. It makes indissolubly a part of the constitution of the European nations. Now, this tradition of eighteen centuries contains the permanent refutation of the principles of this philosophy of history; for from generation to generation, by an uninterrupted succession, this Church has produced astonishing and perfect men, eternally worthy of admiration, who have justified the words, “God is admirable in His saints.” These perfect men, these saints, — to call them by their glorious name, — appear to us, as well as the Church, to be in nowise explicable by this philosophy.

This school is obliged to attribute to enthusiasm, to hallucination, certain facts, whose happy results surpass the calculations of science, and the cogitations of the wisdom of the world. In desiring to avoid recognizing a supernatural action, — a Providence, — it becomes necessary to admit a blind and deaf power: namely, Chance. Then we have explanations that are contrary to good sense. The laws of reason become subverted; the rules of the just, our notion of the beautiful, are reversed or overthrown, to attribute to illusion, to error, and to deceit, the government of humanity. The new philosophy of history is only fatalism, applied to the recital of the events of the world.

The writers imbued with this system, in order to submit Columbus to their theory, accept, complaisantly, every imputation, every biographical error, which tends to lower him, to place him nearer the level of other men. They

accuse him of ingratitude, of puerile vanity, of ignorance, of avarice, of duplicity, of an illicit connection, and of religious enthusiasm, which, in their eyes, is the greatest of his faults. Nevertheless, the inevitable power of truth gets the mastery of them to that point, that, not being able to deny the sublimity of Columbus, they are forced to admire, after his patience and his energy, his unalterable virtue; and with his disinterestedness, his pardon of injuries and offences, and his magnanimity!—in such a manner that, notwithstanding their criticisms, Columbus still remains a prodigy of moral grandeur.

But none of these writers recognizes the providential character of Columbus, or his Christian mission.

We declare, so as to have no more to return to this subject, that this system of philosophy, conceived beyond the Rhine, hatched by Protestantism, and introduced and acclimated in France during the first years of the “Restoration,” cannot, neither proximately nor distantly, be reconciled with the discovery of the New World, or with the life of its Revealer. In vain will you narrow, cramp, lessen the man, distort and dislocate the facts; the supernatural will not show itself the less evident, as it is absurd to attribute certain series of facts to Chance alone; and when Chance disappears, Providence becomes manifest.

With all frankness we say: An Apostle of the Cross, a Messenger of Catholicity,—Christopher Columbus, resuming the thought and the militant fervor of the middle ages, cannot be comprehended and appreciated but by Catholics; the Hero of the Faith is not intelligible to incredulity.

SECTION II.

Those deceive themselves very much, who, after having read the Holy Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, imagine they know the whole history of our Lord Jesus Christ. His well-beloved disciple, in concluding his relation of the Divine Master, says clearly that He did many other things,

and that the books that could be written of them would fill the world. Simple reason would, in reality, inform us that the sole facts reported by the evangelists could not embrace a whole life, or even the whole of the three years of the preaching and teaching of the public life of the Redeemer.

In like manner, those who would believe to have seen here the entire life of the disciple of Christ, Christopher Columbus, would be much mistaken. Columbus did, and said, and wrote many things which will never be repeated, never read, or never known by men in this world. His abridging genius suppressed details; he said himself that he did not write the hundredth part of what had happened to him, and we have had frequent proof of it, in seeking to reconstitute his life.

Independently of these causes of obscurity, the prejudices of his cotemporaries, a certain party spirit indulged in by the Spanish historians, and a badly understood patriotism, have, in a measure, concealed Columbus from us. Those who wrote during the lifetime of King Ferdinand, or of his grandson, Charles V., were obliged, for fear of exciting the royal wrath, to touch but very lightly on the actions and words of Columbus. M. De Lorgues shows this at considerable length, but as the matter is somewhat *foreign* to our purpose, we are reluctantly obliged to pass it by.

It is evident that, with the view of disguising the wrongs done by King Ferdinand, and to render somewhat less odious the excesses committed in the conquest of the Indies, the official writers of Spain have systematically misrepresented the history of Columbus. They have taken care to under-rate and to calumniate the natives most worthy of regard, among others the two sovereigns who had most welcomed the Castilians, — the noble and faithful Guacanagari, and the artless and amiable Anacoana. Not being able to find any fact wherewith to reproach the Admiral, they have circulated vague insinuations against his character, and omitted designedly the edifying incidents of his life, which, in revealing his full Christian grandeur, would the more

clearly have shown the iniquity of the malevolent monarch. How, in fact, could an official writer have dared to speak of a Viceroy to whom his title was refused, of a Grand Admiral without a squadron, or of a Governor-General who was prevented from officiating? The King's malignity followed him to the tomb.

Nevertheless, the transcendent purity of character of Columbus, and what was presented by his extraordinary and almost superhuman role here below, struck these prejudiced men, and led them to avow that pagan antiquity would have raised temples to this demigod who had discovered the New World. Truth has wrung from them the declaration that he who thus had opened a way for the Gospel merited a statue of solid gold.* Without daring to proclaim it loudly, they have recognized the apostolate of Christopher Columbus.

This shameful silence, this malice prepense, of these writers against an immortal glory, imposes on us the duty of exposing clearly what they hoped to conceal, of recognizing authoritatively the special character of Columbus, of establishing, once for all, the role which was assigned him, the providential destination of his commission, and to show the marks of divine favor by which this exceptional man was distinguished from the rest of mankind.

SECTION III.

The moral grandeur of Columbus was not inferior to his work.

Without waiting to consider what his vast existence presents of the mythical and of the superhuman, let us contemplate his providential mission. And in order to judge the better of his public life, we will first examine him as a private individual. Let us view him in his paternal home at Genoa :

* Oviedo. *Histoire Nat. et Gen. des Indies*, liv. vi., chap. viii.

The most characteristic trait of the character of Columbus, that which formed the basis of his moral physiognomy, and which from the cradle to the grave distinguished him through life, was his abiding sense of duty.

The love of his parents is, for the child, the first of his duties. He ought to love them before knowing God. Now, Columbus loved his parents. We have seen that he strove to alleviate their poverty when he himself was needy. He had provided for the wants of the old age of his father before he risked his life in his first voyage of discovery. He sent the first fruits of his success and of transient competency to the venerable old man; and when the latter took his leave of this world, Christopher no more forgot him than he did the pious mother who first had taught him to love and serve God. He gave the name of his father to the capital of the island of Hispaniola. Time did not cool down his filial piety. Age, sufferings, the cares of a family, did not extinguish in his heart the remembrance of his parents. In his seventieth year, he still gave to his father and mother a mark of affectionate solicitude in thinking of the succor of their souls, and in founding masses for their repose.

However ardent the filial affection of Columbus was, it diminished in nothing his fraternal affection. He tenderly loved his brothers, who mingled with respect the return with which they paid him back. Both of them showed him an equal devotedness. In recommending to his eldest son to love his young brother, Don Fernando, he said to him: "Ten brothers would not be too many for you. I have never found better friends at my right and my left than my brothers." Never was elder brother more provident, more grateful than was Columbus towards his younger brothers. His solicitude for their interests is seen even in his official relations with the Sovereigns. He thought of their welfare in his institution of Mayorazgo. In this regard, the dispositions of this act are, perhaps, without an equal. He had their services present to his mind when

writing his Will. He named, as his first testamentary executor Don Bartholomew, and knew how to inspire his children with the respect and attachment for his brothers, of which they were so worthy.

The sacrifice of his heart, which Columbus had made to the cause of the Gospel, prevents us from judging of him as a husband. We will not speak of his conjugal life, which was a continual privation of domestic happiness. All that is known of his marriage is, that he had all the responsibilities and cares of it, without enjoying the sweet compensations for them that are found in the endearments of the domestic hearth. But who can doubt that he who showed himself to be so tender a father, was not equally an affectionate husband?

Columbus had for his eldest son, who was at so early an age deprived of his mother, bowels truly maternal. He loved him with the provident tenderness Doña Felippa would have for him had she lived. He cherished with an equal affection his second son, Fernando. The artless complaisance with which he speaks of this little boy, even in his letters to the Sovereigns, and the manner in which he recommends him to his elder brother, manifest the exquisite sensibility that animated his paternal heart.

Great efforts and researches have been made to ascertain what was the first cause of the conviction of Columbus, and of his determination to discover an unknown continent. Some writers have thought that he possessed some mathematical knowledge superior to that of his age, and that he was the first who had made use of the astrolabe and the quadrant. Especially a great influence on the mind of Columbus has been attributed to the *quasi-sibylline* verses of a tragedy of Seneca, entitled *Medea*.* In the same

* . . . "Venient annis
Sæcula seris, quibus Oceanus
Vincula rerum laxit, et ingens
Peateat telus, Typhis que novos
Detegat orbes, nee sit terris
Ultima Thule. . . ."—*Medea*, Act II.

manner, it has been believed that the idea of the existence of a continent to the west, beyond the pillars of Hercules, was suggested to him by some ancient authors.

These inferences, with which minds have hitherto been contented, will not bear a thorough and serious examination.

In the first place, the nautical instruments known by Columbus were already familiar to all the mariners of his time; and, even before he was born, the mariner's compass, the astrolabe, and the quadrant and sextant were used. His particular specialty in mathematics would appear, at the present time, questionable. Humboldt accuses him of gross ignorance in this respect, and of having made false observations in the neighborhood of the Azores. He finds that he was not familiar "but with the practice of the methods of observation, without having sufficiently studied the principles upon which these methods are founded." * It is not, then, to transcendental mathematics that the honor of the idea and of the energetic will of Columbus should be attributed.

Great importance has been attached to the verses of the *Medea*, because they have been found twice copied by the hand of Columbus. But nothing proves that they had the least influence on his determination. The very paper on which was written the reflection of Columbus upon the subject of these verses, testifies, by its certain date, against this supposition. These verses, to which nobody, not even Columbus himself, paid any attention before his discovery, are transcribed in the rough sketch of his Book of the Prophecies, *Las Profecias*; consequently, not only after his first expedition, but even after his fourth voyage, while he languished, shipwrecked, in Jamaica. These verses had no meaning before the enterprise of Columbus. His expedition has endowed them with a marvellous meaning; but, until he appeared, nobody had remarked it. It would be equally injudicious to attribute a determining influence to the fragments of authors which everybody, as well as

* Humboldt. *Examen Critique*, etc., t. III., p. 20.

Columbus, could have examined. Assuredly certain ideas of Eratosthenes and of Posidonius, reported in Strabo, the words of the Timæus of Plato on the subject of the Atlantis, some cosmographical ideas of Aristotle on the form and the little extent of the earth, divers cursory views of the geography of the Arabians, the work of Albertus Magnus, — the *Liber Cosmographicus*, that of Roger Bacon, — the *Opus Majus*, as well as the book of Cardinal Peter D'Ailly, the *Imago Mundi*, — were known and examined; and still these several authorities had converted nobody to the idea of Columbus. And when, at the Junta of Salamanca, he heard the voice of an adherent, it was not that of a cosmographer, but of a theologian, the Dominican Diego de Deza.

Moreover, the science of that period could have only misled Columbus. In the first place, it had no positive teaching: it opposed conjectures to other conjectures, without the authority of experimentation being able to decide the controversy. There was no agreement in regard to the form or the extent of the earth; and the only datum upon which Columbus could have supported himself relative to the aqueous mass of the globe was a manifest error, the opposite of the teachings of subsequent observation.

If some believed in the existence of antipodes, others denied it to such a point that even after the death of Columbus there were *savants* who inveighed against such a belief. In the time that Herrera wrote his "General History of the Indies," there were some doctors who sneered at the idea of there being antipodes. This historian declares that the pretended insights which are imagined to be found in certain passages of the ancients in regard to the existence of unknown lands, were extremely uncertain, very obscure, and almost unintelligible until the Discovery of Columbus gave them the clearness and the sense which have been attributed to them since that period.

The dissertations of biographers to ascertain the origin of the project of Columbus to discover the other half of the globe, appear to us to be equally worthless; deprived, as

they are, of authority, and incapable of leading to conviction. What author better than Columbus himself can inform us whence he derived his first idea? Let us listen to him; this idea did not come to him from either sphere or compass, or from mathematics, or from his own reflection. He does not attribute to himself the merit of it. This idea presented itself to him by a sudden inspiration. "It was," he says, "the Holy Trinity who incited in him the thought, rendering it more and more clear to him that one could go by sea from the West to the East." * This idea, which showed itself at first as a luminous point in the light and shade of the imagination, acquired gradually, by meditation, its development and perfect lucidity. This first inspiration was afterwards strengthened by the reading of various authors. Columbus, then, discovered in their writings what the commonalty of readers did not notice in them. But we may safely affirm that, by their sole authority, some verses from Seneca, and passages from ancient authors, would never have produced that unalterable conviction which knew how to resist eighteen years of doubts, of negations, and of scientific disdain.

Columbus has taken a place in the history of the progress of the sciences, from which he never will be dispossessed. In our own days, Humboldt, whom his admirers call "the modern Aristotle," is attracted to him; he admires him "preserving, amid so many material and minute cares, which freeze the soul and contract the character, a profound and poetic sentiment of the grandeur of nature." It is, in fact, unheard-of that the chief of a squadron, a governor having the care of a new administration, bestowed equal attention on the observation of the country he was exploring. Humboldt acknowledges that "what characterizes Columbus is the penetration and extreme accuracy with which he seizes the phenomena of the external world. He is quite as remarkable as an observer of nature as he is

* *Libro de las Profecias*, fol. iv.

as an intrepid navigator. Arrived under new heavens, and in a new world, the configuration of lands, the aspect of vegetation, the habits of animals, the distribution of heat according to longitude, the pelagian currents, the variations of terrestrial magnetism, — nothing escaped his sagacity! . . . Columbus does not limit himself to collecting isolated facts; he combines them, he seeks their mutual relations to each other. He sometimes rises with boldness to the discovery of the general laws that govern the physical world." Want of space prevents us from mentioning here his grand views, his bold judgments on Nature, the conquests of his genius in the regions of the unknown, which he penetrated with so much audacity; we will limit ourselves to mentioning the principal discoveries which have come forth from his writings.

These grand discoveries in the scientific order, are seven in number:

1. The influence exercised by longitude on the declination of the magnetic needle.
2. The variations to which isothermal lines are subject, in following the direction of curves from the western coasts of Europe to the eastern shores of the New World.
3. The position of the great field of sea-weeds in the basin of the Atlantic, whence issue the shoals of fish destined for our food.
4. The general direction of the tropical seas.
5. The geological causes of the configuration of the Antilles.
6. The equatorial swelling, implying a flattening at the poles.
7. The continental equilibrium of the globe, which nobody before him supposed.

In addition to his discovery of the New World, mankind owes to Columbus these seven discoveries, the least of which would assuredly have rendered illustrious a whole academy. These conquests were not the fruit of acquired science, but the recompense of attention united to a faculty of obser-

vation, which enabled him to seize and to compare the phenomena of this world. If he was not supported by science, as we are assured by all *savants* with Humboldt that he was not, who, then, revealed to him all the secrets of these causes, until then hidden from human knowledge?

In default of physical studies, he carried into his investigations an assiduity so great, a desire so ardent to penetrate into the secrets of Nature, and Faith aided him to rise so high, the better to discover the order of Creation, that he could more easily than another perceive the indices by which the fundamental laws of our globe are revealed. He did not seek knowledge, or the secrets of nature, through simple curiosity; he besought God to enlighten him; he implored Him to come to his aid,—not to dispense him from mental labor (to which man is doomed), or to obtain the knowledge of things without effort on his part,—but to guide him in his investigations. And his thought,—rendered more keen by the contemplation of divine things, becomes more agile, more easily sustained in the higher region of the understanding,—thus saw further, quicker, and more accurately than science, proceeding according to its own data, would have enabled it to do.

Columbus loved Nature especially on account of its Creator, his Master, and always saw the Divine Architect in his work. Far from becoming weakened by years, his close intimacy, his familiarity with Nature, like true friendship, could only become more intimate and inseparable by his explorations. The more he knew Nature the more he loved the Word made flesh, and the more he desired to serve Him. In growing old, his admiration and his gratitude increased with his years. In his soarings there is no doubt; his belief is firm and complete, because he connects visible things with their invisible principle, according to the Catholic doctrine,—the only true philosophy. If, in his first explorations, supporting himself somewhat on the teachings of science, he made some mistakes, some blunders, experience and observation modified his first opinions, and he

was enabled of himself to correct them. If at first, in order to combat the opinion of those who regard the earth as extended to infinity, he said, in comparing our planet to the other creations of God, "This world is not as large as the commonalty of men consider it; I say that this earth is a small affair," it was because he considered what he had discovered of little extent compared to what could be discovered.

The portion of the writings of Columbus which paper has collected, that at least which has come down to us, is not very extensive. We possess only a very small part of what issued from his pen. He wrote a great many letters to the Queen as well as to some religious, to the apostolic prothonotary, Peter Martyr, and to some notables of the Court. We have scarcely only sixteen of them, unless we give the name to some epistolary fragments scattered in various documents.

The History of his four voyages, written for the Holy Father on the plan of "Cæsar's Commentaries," is lost, as well as the Narration of his second voyage, addressed to the Catholic Sovereigns. His notes, his geographical charts, which the curate of Palacios, Las Casas, and Don Fernando had before their eyes, have disappeared. The observations he had written down after his third voyage, his remarks on natural history, and his cosmographic views seized on by Bobadilla, the twenty-sixth of August, 1500, were never returned. Nothing is absolutely known of what has become of the complete Book of the Prophecies. We have of it only the rough sketch, informal and mutilated.

What characterizes the style of Columbus is its spontaneity, its brevity, its strength, the absence of arrangement and of art. He would wish to say everything at the same time; hence results in certain passages something diffuse, and apparently obscure, but which is elevated, profound and synthetic, in the manner of St. Paul. Sober in his style as in his life, Columbus, avoiding phraseological embellishment, goes always straight to the point in the simplest and shortest manner. Such is his heedlessness for

all arrangement in his writings, whatever they may be, that even his official reports to the Sovereigns bear the impress of improvisation. Never did he, even as Admiral, make a studied report. One would say that there were several men in him. He writes at the same time in quality of Messenger of Salvation and of Contemplator of the Creation; he speaks as a mariner, as a missionary, as a naturalist, and seems urged to say everything at the same time. Still, when writing as head of the colonial government, he does so with method and precision, and shows himself to be an admirable administrator.

The intimate relation between the style and the character of the man, which nowadays has become a proverbial verity, is seen in a palpable manner in the writings of Columbus.

This man lived in the presence of God. His meditations were made in the very midst of the most divine manifestation of the infinite that is accessible to our senses: namely, the ocean! The ocean, one over the whole globe, and so diverse in its unchangeable unity,—the ocean, which absorbs our contemplation, which makes the poet dumb, interdicts philosophy, and scares the semi-thinker,—fecundated the genius of Columbus. Near the brilliant skies of the tropics, near the Fortunate Isles and in the lands of the Azores, the boldness of his thoughts came from reflection; his maturity of conviction was formed under the inspiration of the divine Word,—that conviction which neither the force of time nor the weakness of man was able to shake.

Like his genius, the style of Columbus seems to tower and increase in grandeur with his years. His most remarkable production was written in his sixty-seventh year. The fire of youth and of poetry, warming his breast, pierced through the iciness of old age like the volcanoes of the Andes at the limits of perpetual snow. He thus shows an unalterable strength, exempted from the laws of time and of physical influences. The ardor of his piety, the freshness of his inspiration, are still seen at the end of his fourth

expedition, in his disastrous voyage of 1503. Escaped miraculously from an inevitable shipwreck, his ships shattered and half-submerged, with great difficulty reaching a port where the leakages put them in danger of sinking, finding himself in the face of threatened famine, and racked with a merciless gout, far from participating in the despondency of his crews, or being terrified by this state of things, he unites his thoughts with those of the Catholic Church, solemnizes with her the feast of St. John the Baptist, and, during the fast he is obliged to observe, he celebrates in majestic verse the birth of the precursor of the Messiah. This poetic inspiration, amid sufferings and ships half-submerged, is undoubtedly the only example of literary composition that has ever been produced in similar circumstances.

What an idea does not this peaceful chant of a Christian soul give us of the serenity of spirit and the piety of Columbus, overcoming the pains of the flesh and the terrors of his situation, thinking, at that great distance, only of participating in the joy of the Catholic Church, and of celebrating on that day the nativity of St. John, who leaped in the womb of his mother at the voice of the Virgin blessed among all women, who bore within her the Divine Saviour!

SECTION IV.

If Columbus had limited himself to the discovery of new lands, we might, in fully recognizing his genius, consider him simply as a cosmographic navigator; but his discoveries are so closely connected with his private life, with his faith, and his apostolic role influences his official acts to such an extent, that it is diametrically opposed to justice to judge of him without regard to his religious sentiments, the principle and the end of his public existence.

And if anybody be surprised that, after having mentioned his excellent qualities, we have not, with that strict impartiality which history requires, and which it is the

duty of the historian or the biographer to conform to, sought the weak part of the character of Columbus, in order to put his failings side by side with his virtues, and fairly submit them to the appreciation of the reader, we reply in advance to such a reproach, that it is in vain we have auscultated the heart of this hero ; we have examined it in every point of view, and never have we been able to detect in it a voluntary fault, a wrong, or a failing. To go to the end with our declaration, we even frankly avow that we are not surprised at this total absence of censurable propensities or actions in the whole course of his life, because we find no vices or defects in saints.

Generally speaking, in great men the weaknesses inherent in our nature can be recognized, although mitigated by their generosity, the elevated scenes in which they moved, the respect for public and individual opinion, and the fear of posterity. But in the heroes of the Gospel there is no fault of character, no weakness ; charity, in purifying them, elevates, ennobles them. They have to such an extent admired and imitated the divine model, that they have modified their own nature, in order to approximate to it as nearly as humanity will permit.

We will, then, in all frankness, speak our opinion of Columbus :

This man had no defect of character, or no worldly quality. We have weighty reasons for considering him a saint.

It is with just reason that we go straight to the point, speaking of what is seen in him, and not troubling ourselves about what is not found in him, for the very reason that his other biographers, who, to comply with the requirements of the so-called system of historic philosophy, have labored by erroneous inferences, to show that Columbus had faults of character, have not been able to cite a single one in support of their charges against him. Furthermore, because these writers, one after the other, yielding to the logic of facts, have all been led to efface, themselves, the consequences of their blame and of their reservations,

and to finish with a eulogy of the virtues of Columbus so complete, that they wholly neutralize their own criticisms of him. Without their knowing it, this attempt only serves the better to show plainly his moral superiority.

SECTION V.

It can be safely affirmed, that by an intimate solidarity, the purity of life of the private man serves in advance as a pledge of the dignity and irreproachable conduct of the public functionary. After having seen Columbus taking care that justice and equity should reign supreme in his own household, we naturally expect from him strict observance of duty, especially when political responsibilities or interests are united with his moral obligations.

In the elevated scene to which he suddenly ascended, invested the same day with the triple dignities of Grand Admiral, Governor-General, and Viceroy, Columbus never failed in his engagements or duties. During his administration, nobody accused him of partiality. The haughty *hidalgos*, the persecutors of the Indians, alone complained that he protected the natives: his solicitude for them wounded their Castilian pride. But Columbus, the disciple of the Gospel, was not to be swayed by class privileges; his zeal was extended to the interests of all. He established, strictly, complete equality before the laws. We have already shown* that his administration was exempt from blame; so, without waiting here for any more details, we will glance at some groups of facts:

His refusal of a principality, lest his particular advantages or interests should turn him from his public duties, shows, more than words could do, his disinterestedness.

Grand Admiral of the Ocean, Viceroy, and Governor-General, with a perpetual title, he never forgot the obedience

* Book II., chap. VIII., § ii.

he owed, and submitted to the orders of a simple commissary of the Sovereigns, so much did he respect legitimate authority visibly delegated from Above.

Always he gave the example of devotedness, and of equality in misfortune. During dearths or sickness, whether at sea or on land, he availed himself of none of his privileges, and would accept of only the common allowances.

His administrative measures present no eagerness for temporary advantages, that blind yielding to imaginary urgency which shapes the greater part of the acts of authority in the management of affairs. He never sacrifices to the actualities of the present day the interests of future days, for he knows that the acts of the administration endure longer than the administrator does, and that the future is wholly contained in the present. On no occasion do we see him descend to hankerings for earthly glory, yield to any ambition for popularity, or truckle for the favors of the Court. The chicaneries of the bureaus, the injustice and ingratitude of the King, do not cause him to vary in his conduct.

When even the text of his conventions with the Sovereigns gave him the right to defend by arms the perpetual government of which he was in possession, and his vice-royalty of the Indies, which no posterior order could annul, he gives the example of Christian obedience to legitimate authority. He respects to the end his oath of allegiance, and does not consider himself absolved from it by the injustice of others. In place of entertaining any rancor, or punishing the Sovereigns by his inaction, he still seeks to serve the Crown of Castile. After the death of the Queen, he recommends to his son to redouble his zeal for the service of the King, and to seek to lighten the weight of affairs for him.

The activity of Columbus, his care of details, his foresight, his moderation, his firmness, his devotedness, his respect for authority even when it is inimical to himself, his protection of the weak, of the sailors who participated in his toils and sufferings, and his grateful remembrance of his

faithful and zealous subordinates, make him a model of public virtues.

As religion is the secret of this force, the bond of all his actions and of his virtues, Columbus is shown to men of the world as a bright example. A saint seems to be a model only for the purest-minded among Christians. A bishop, a founder of a monastic Order, a missionary, appear to be proposed as examples only for bishops, priests and religious. One would say that the cloister or the sanctuary has alone profited by their history. Providence has judged it expedient to show mankind a laic who is a functionary according to the Gospel. Columbus, a layman and an administrator, in the official world, is especially a model, a lesson, for high functionaries, and even for sovereigns. His life is pregnant with fruitful instruction.

Subordinates will there learn to bear courageously the miscalculations they may make, and the injustices that may be done them, in the course of their functions or their career. The life of Columbus shows that merit may not be rewarded here below: he suffers, but he does not rise in rebellion. The Christian sees in these trials a means of making himself a better man, and of atoning, by his resignation, for his secret negligences towards God. Besides, resignation to the Divine Will brings with it an interior sweetness, which is not known by the spirit of the world.

If Columbus, planting himself on his strict rights, his conventions with the Crown of Castile, had arisen in insurrection, and repulsed with arms the commissaries Aguado, Bobadilla, and Ovando, who sought to dispossess him; if he had secured to himself an independent state, appropriating to himself the island of Hispaniola, his end would have been that of an ordinary man: the grandeur and the poetry of his labors would have been eclipsed in this vulgar turn of fortune; the interest which the whole world will ever attach to his touching memory would long since have vanished; he would have been despoiled of that halo of glory, the wreaths of which his ill-fortune so holily supported.

In seeing such grand services so badly rewarded, such just rights ignored, one learns to support with less pain petty injustices, clashings of interests, the promptings of self-love, the wrongs done by the public, or by superiors. What are the wrongs of an administration, of a municipality, of a captain of a corps towards an individual, of an employé, or of an officer, when one thinks of the services rendered by Columbus, and the manner in which he was rewarded for them? One will no longer complain of oppositions, of little vexations, or of unjust preferences, in calling to mind what Columbus suffered without murmuring.

If we arise to the cause of his force of soul, of his tranquillity of mind, in what concerns him, we shall see that his knowledge of the feebleness of human nature, his high conception of God, his notion of the divine goodness, his desire for pardoning, to be, in his turn, pardoned; his consciousness of the fleetness of this world, of the instability of terrestrial things, and the detachment from transitory things of his soul, which was wholly raised to immortal joys and splendors, sustained him during his trials. He consoled himself with hopes of the imperishable, and of the supreme good, for the deceptions and the iniquities of the present life.

SECTION VI.

We have been contemplating a man of perfect virtue, of an entire purity of heart, whose moral grandeur surpasses the most celebrated types of antiquity, and who is not inferior to the noblest of those of the heroes formed by the Gospel.

But this is not all. To form a correct judgment of Columbus, let us endeavor to enter into the depths of his character.

Assuredly, when we examine him thoroughly, embracing in the same view the principal acts and events of his career, we are led to recognize that his public character, which was in necessary relation with his private character, presents, in

a special manner, the marks of a religious mission, and of an evangelical mandate. As was so justly said by Father Ventura, — “Columbus is the man of the Church.”

In reality, Columbus belongs much more decidedly to the Church than he does to the marine. Though fixed in the world by his functions, he habitually lived in it more like a religious than a laic. After his arrival in Spain, — a country which Providence destined to serve for His views, — Columbus was miraculously conducted to a monastery, where he prepared himself for his great mission.

There he unites himself solely with religious or with ecclesiastics. At Court, where he was introduced by the former Apostolic Nunçio, from all, with the exception of the Grand Cardinal and the Queen, he receives only opposition. At the junta of the *savants* in Salamanca he encounters only distrust or disdain. He is supported only by one man, who is a religious and a theologian. The Dominicans next become his hosts; he receives from them hospitality and pecuniary aid.

When, tired of waiting, he is going to quit Spain, it is a monk who retains him; who goes to the Queen, and causes him to be called back, and who, finishing with his prayers what he had commenced with exhortations, obtains the royal word of Isabella.

It is to this monastery that Columbus returns; it is here that he prepares himself for his expedition, not with compasses, charts, or other aids of the sciences, but by penance, prayer, and the meditation of things divine. His expedition takes the religious character of its origin and object: he gives the name of the Blessed Virgin to his ship, and hoists the Cross in her; he departs on a Friday, and commands the sails to be unfurled in the name of Jesus Christ.

It is in the name of Jesus Christ that he takes possession of the lands he discovers. It is to honor the Redeemer that he erects Crosses everywhere he lands. After having proclaimed the glory of Jesus Christ on the billows, he spreads His Name in the virgin groves of the archipelagos, and

the coasts of the New Continent. Through his piety, the prayers of the universal language of Catholicity strike the ear. The inhabitants of the islands, and the tribes of the woods, salute the symbol of Redemption and of eternal beatitude. Following the example of Christopher Columbus, they voluntarily kneel before this emblem, the signification of which they do not yet know, but the mysterious influence of which they feel.

He was the first who carried the Cross to the new country. He was the precursor of the missionaries, the herald of Catholicity, and the tacit mandatory of the Papacy. He was the first who conceived, or, at least, formed the idea, of a seminary for the foreign missions,—and desired to found it at his own expense.

He presents the Holy See with an opportunity, or occasion, of showing the spirit of infallible sagacity that perpetually inspires the Church, and of proving, in an unquestionable manner, that the Papacy, far from striking with an anathema those who admitted the existence of a new continent, as was so often repeated by some writers of the eighteenth century, praised the man who discovered it, and formed a judgment of the form and dimensions of the globe, much bolder, and more exact and sagacious, than did the cosmographers and *savants* of that period.

Far from secularizing himself after his Discovery, of enjoying in the world his triumph, his sudden importance, or of delighting in his vice-royalty, he aspires only to new explorations, in order to proclaim, in countries still more distant, the Name of the Redeemer. He regularly says the office of the Franciscan religious. At Valladolid, at Granada, wherever he sojourns, it is in their monasteries that he has his abode. Outside of the Seraphic Order, he has no intimate relations but with the Dominicans, the Carthusians, the Hieronymites, with ecclesiastics of edifying lives, and with simple men serving God. He is but very seldom seen in commerce with the grand, or with the favorites of the Court. A Tertiary, or member of the Third

Order of St. Francis, he lived as a true religious not raised to the priesthood.

The subsequent voyages of Columbus had for their object only the diffusion of the Gospel. All his posterior discoveries being merely the execution of his plan, it may truly be said that, — thanks to him, — the Perpetual Sacrifice of the New Law, announced and prophesied in the Old Law, has been really established on the earth. At every hour of the day and of the night, the immolation of the Divine victim is renewed in the two hemispheres. When the vesperal chant of complin announces the close of day in Europe, that of matins has already preceded the dawn in other regions; and while the night covers with its shadows the Eastern hemisphere, the August Sacrifice is offered up in the Andes, and among the islands of the Pacific. The sun shines incessantly on the ceremonies of the Church of Jesus Christ. The words of the prophets, the accents of the psalmists, the recitals of the evangelists, join and succeed each other according to the rules of the Roman Liturgy; and from the Old World to the New the glory of the Word, like His mercy, is announced to man. The power of Catholic unity is strikingly manifested in the permanency of this homage rendered to our Lord; for, on this globe, it is solely the Catholic Church that offers this unchangeable perpetuity of aspirations to Heaven. The Holy Sacrifice is continued without interruption, like organic life, the respiration of plants, or the rotation of the earth around its axis.

After the discovery of the totality of our planet, to show there the emblem of Salvation, Columbus had but one desire, the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre, in order to facilitate the access of all nations to it, and to give the possession of it to the Holy See. He had no temporal inquietude but in relation to this spiritual object, and to preserve from all future dismemberment the patrimony of the Church. His recourse to the Holy See, the spiritual powers he besought from it, the services he offered to render it, the consideration the Papacy manifested for him, the confidence it

reposed in him, as well in regard to the Line of Demarkation as to the erection of episcopal sees in the Indies, and the assiduous relations it required of him to keep with it, — seem to confirm tacitly the character of apostolic legate with which he showed himself invested in his acts and in his intentions. His exemplary piety, his confidence in God, the lustre of his rank, the humility of his life, his unheard-of misfortunes, and his services without equal, distinguish him from the rest of mortals. Since the beginning of the world, never did any man accomplish so vast a work as he did. The evangelic mildness of the means corresponded with the holiness of the object. Without shedding a drop of blood, without causing a tear to flow, he doubled the known space of the earth, and opened to science an illimitable field.

Evidently God chose Christopher Columbus as a Messenger of Salvation.

From the cradle this man was marked with a mysterious seal. Belonging to the era of the revival of letters, which is so familiarly known to us, he seems still more to participate of the legendary existence of the sainted civilizers of the middle ages. He remains surrounded with the marvellous, notwithstanding the prosaic accusations of his enemies. Columbus introduced himself to notice during the full movement of literary progress, the blooming season of universities and of printing in Spain. He occasioned the institution of naval schools, of hydrographic commissions, and the development of the marine. And still his imposing grandeur seems to elevate him above the level of history, to render him back to the shadowy ages of the myth and the epopee. It is because every grandeur which is detached from the earth carries in itself its sublimity, and every sublimity its poetry.

For the reason that Columbus, chosen by God, was called to accomplish the work of Providence, the mark of this election is seen in the midst of the positivism of the details of the functions he had to discharge. This high dignitary

of the marine, this Governor-General of the colonies, has something about him that is strange and exceptional, which at first sight does not strike the vulgar mind, but which Christian souls and interior men may easily remark.

SECTION VII.

In the primitive history of Catholicity, which an uninterrupted filiation conducts to the cradle of mankind, we see, by an express intention of Providence, the patriarchs and prophets receive in advance, at their birth, names symbolic of the character or the role they are to display. Equally in the establishment of the Gospel, we see also, without exception, the first coöperators chosen by our Lord, bear names figurative of their particular destination.

Before the divine Redeemer of men preached His doctrine, His precursor, John the Baptist, descended from the priestly race of Abia, bore the significative name which was given him by supernatural authority,* notwithstanding the opposition of his relations, who all wished him to be called Zachary, like his father, and spurned the name of John, because no one of their family had borne it.† The name of John, — *Johannes*, — expresses true piety, grace, mercy, which he who prepared the ways of the Lord announced to men. *Rectas facite semitas ejus.*

The first of the evangelists was called Levi, son of Alpheus. Jesus Christ, in calling him to follow Him, gave him the name of Matthew, which expresses, at the same time, a voluntary gift and the gratuity of the favor.

Not to multiply examples, we will mention only one more, that of the Prince of the Apostles, St. Peter, the Chief of the Church.

At the time the Divine Redeemer perceived him casting nets with the aid of his brother in the Sea of Galilee, he

* Luke 1: 61.

† *Ibid.*

was simply Simon Bar-jona. Already these two names united, presented an interesting signification. Jesus tells him to leave his nets, that He will make him a fisher of men. Immediately, with an obedience as unfeigned as it was submissive, he abandons the nets, his means of gaining a living. And although married, having in his charge his sick mother-in-law, he follows the Messiah without the least hesitation, without inquiring about his new means of subsistence, or of providing for his family.

This unhesitating confidence, this prompt obedience, an index of the uprightness of intention and of the faithful simplicity which distinguished the eldest of the Apostles, was strikingly represented by his name of Simon Bar-jona, for in Hebrew-Syriac Simon signifies *who obeys*, and Bar-jona, *Son of the Dove*. In advance, the name of this obscure fisherman, expressing obedience and simplicity, foretold, also, the Eldest, since the Dove (in Latin *Columbus*) was the symbol of it.* But to these two names the Divine Master added a third, which was to complete the figure of his destiny; he gave him the name of Cephas, which, interpreted, means Peter, — a *rock*, — the foundation-stone. And such is the power of this name, that after having said to him, “I say to thee that thou art Peter,” our Redeemer immediately adds, “and upon this rock I will build my Church.”†

It would not be astonishing if the man chosen to double the known extent of the earth, and to carry the Gospel among unknown nations, should not likewise present in his name some mysterious or symbolic meanings.

* The Dove, the emblem of a pacific message, a memento of the ark of Noe, became, on account of its antiquity, the emblem of Seniority, and in this quality figured in the standards of the most ancient of peoples, the Assyrians, from whom Juda descended by Arphaxad.

† Et ego dico tibi quia tu es Petrus et super hanc Petram ædificabo, Ecclesiam meam et portæ inferi non prævalebunt adversus eam.” — *St. Matth.* xvi: 18.

After his birth, the oldest of the sons of Dominic Colombo was presented at the baptismal font in a church dedicated to St. Stephen, the first martyr. There a baptismal name was added to his family name. This infant had from that moment the names the most appropriate that could be for the functions he was to discharge among men.

From his parentage his surname was COLOMBO. This name, which in Latin is COLUMBUS, a Dove, means at the same time innocence, purity, simplicity of heart,—the message on water, the pacific message, the divine message; the prompt arrival, the happy news, the discovered land. It also expresses navigation, maritime genius, the primary piece of every ship—the keel.* To these names, so expressive, which he held by right of blood, the Church added another, which was to be indicative of his future mission,—CHRISTOPHORUS,—that is to say, who bears Christ, who transports the Cross, who spreads the Gospel.

The power of his name augurs that of his destiny.

Everything in his life is a subject of surprise and astonishment. In his early youth, though of an ancient race, he performs obscure labors in poverty. Afterwards, on the day set by Providence, he who was formerly only a cabin-boy becomes Grand Admiral of the Ocean; the former apprentice of a wool-carder takes his rank as perpetual Governor, Admiral, and Viceroy of the Indies. He is saluted in his triple dignity in a land situated beyond the GLOOMY OCEAN. The revolted crews, who two days before desired to cast him into the billows, become humbled before his genius, and take an oath of obedience to him, as to a monarch.

If we consider at one stretch, and in mass, the events of the life of Columbus, we immediately perceive that the

*In ancient times, in Italy, the keel of every vessel was called the COLOMBO. This name is still found in the "Treatise on Naval Constructions," by Bartolomeo Crescentio.—*A. Fal. Archeologie Navale.*

picturesqueness and the poetry of these events almost equal their grandeur.

The white sails of his three caravels remind us of the three white doves on the azure field of his paternal or family arms, having, for device, the three names of the three theological virtues; his first expedition, wonderful for its rapidity, and the return of which was still more wonderful on account of the successive tempests that beset it; the mysterious relations between Fridays and the events of this enterprise, undertaken in honor of the Crucified; the report of his triumph rejoicing his old father, as a reward for his filial piety; his three first voyages, undertaken and accomplished with three caravels, in the name of the Thrice-Holy Trinity; his career of discoveries, composed of four maritime expeditions; his hospitality from the Seraphic Order four times; then his posthumous voyages, for finding that funereal repose which Dante, during his lifetime, implored from the Franciscans of Corvo; the visible assistance of God during his gigantic labors; the wonderful scientific conquests due to this man, whom some modern *savants* exclude from the ranks of the learned; the protection accorded to him who touched him, and to those who went in his name; his chief sufferings coming from those whom he had most obliged or served; the majesty of his old age; the vigorous poetry of his intellect, which resists time and misfortunes; in fine, his agony, radiant with intelligence, and his final departure on the anniversary of the Ascension of the Redeemer, — this strangeness, these oppositions, these grandeurs, which one would say were destined long ago for recitals in heroic tragedies, or for the strings of the harp, do they not separate Columbus from all the human existences recorded in history?

The facts and events of this man's career are no less curious, strange and wonderful, than they are certain and indubitable; and yet those who witnessed them, who participated in them, who aided in their accomplishment, did not understand them, or did not heed them. The chiefs of

the bureau of marine were as silly as they were irreligious. They did not see that their chicaneries would add to the grandeur of their innocent victim, and that they were raising him in the eyes of posterity, when they thought they were lowering him in the estimation of the courtiers of the King.

But, in order to be just, it must be acknowledged that some choice Christians, such as the illustrious Franciscan Cardinal Ximenes, and the learned Dominican Diego de Deza, Archbishop of Seville, had glimpses of the mysterious seal affixed to his august destination. Some others, away from the Court, had a clear perception of his grandeur; like the noble lapidary of Burgos, they considered that Christopher Columbus had fulfilled a providential mandate. Since that time several learned Spanish theologians and commentators have been struck with the mystic connection existing between the acts of Columbus and certain sentences in the Holy Scriptures. Father Acosta acknowledges that divers passages of the Prophet Isaias, among others chap. lxvi., may be applied to the Discovery of the Indies, and says: "Several very learned authors declare that the whole of this chapter refers to the Indies." In his book "*De Consolatione Ecclesiæ*," the great Cardinal Valerio extolled implicitly the character of Columbus. Maluenda, Thomas Bozius, Ponce de Leon, Botera, Father Thomas of Jesus, Solorzano Herrera, and all those who have seriously studied the epoch of the Discovery, have been persuaded that the mission of Columbus was providential. It was not without surprise and admiration that they have seen his ships, and even his armorial ensigns, announced by the Prince-Prophet. We find in the Holy Scriptures nine passages clearly applicable to the Discovery of the New World.

The progress of time has served only to render more manifest these relations, and to elucidate their applications. That the mission of Columbus, — that event which was to modify so profoundly the future circumstances of humanity,

—was shown to the Prophet, to whom the Messiah was revealed, will appear in nowise extraordinary to those souls who are, happily, imbued with divine truth. As to those persons who will not ascend so high, and who demand more recent testimonies, we answer that, outside of written documents, there exists, even to this day, the proof of a forgotten announcement, of a mysterious presentiment of peoples, relative to the mission of Columbus, and we loyally forewarn them that without Columbus the mysterious figure which is going to be presented to them would be inexplicable.

SECTION VIII.

To the revelations of Israel there succeeded, after the times of the Messiah, a prophecy, the author of which is no better known than the origin, the origin than the date, the date than the language, and still which a constant transmission has brought down to our own days. This mysterious prophecy, without a written text, without an avowed father, come nobody knows whence, like the mysterious rumors that agitated the Roman world immediately previous to the birth of the Saviour, has been represented under the form of an anonymous tradition; collective, perhaps, but assuredly popular.

This tradition has been personified by sculpture, has been installed in the ruined basilicas of Antioch and of Byzantium, and in the old churches of Romanic style, whence it has glided into monasteries and abbeys, and even into Gothic cathedrals, by means of mural paintings and statuary. A pious belief has caused the adoption, as commemorative of the past, this symbolic image of the future. We desire to recall the colossal effigy of St. Christopher, and his popular legend. It must not be forgotten that St. Christopher was the patron saint of Columbus.

Let us first see the real history of this saint, and afterwards we will appreciate the signification of the symbols that are assigned him.

From hagiography we learn the following particulars of him: Opherus, a Syrian by birth, was a pagan, and of gigantic stature, — a kind of Goliath, proud of his strength, and desirous of serving none but the most powerful king on earth. Having become a Christian at the sight of a miracle, in the ardor of his faith he would have no other name but *Christophorus* (Christ-bearer). St. Babylus, Bishop of Antioch, admitted him to baptism. Christopher published the Gospel in his own country, in the environs of Palestine, in several countries of Asia Minor, and travelled constantly, preaching courageously the Good News, until the time when, arrested by the emissaries of idolatry, during the persecution of the Emperor Decius, he sealed with his blood the Cross which he had borne.

His martyrdom was promptly celebrated in the East. Soon the Orientals rendered him honors. St. Ambrose praised him highly. St. Christopher is classed in the most ancient martyrologies. Formerly two churches in Constantinople were dedicated to him. The “Mosarabic Breviary,” attributed to St. Isidore of Seville, makes mention of him. In the time of St. Gregory the Great there was a monastery in Sicily under the name of *St. Christopher*. From the seventh century downwards, Toledo, and several other cities in Spain, possessed some relics of this martyr. In Paris the parish church of his name was one of the most ancient ones in the city.

Nothing is more authentic, nothing more precise, than this history of St. Christopher. Nothing, again, is better established than the ancientness of the honors rendered to him since the fourth century of the Church. Still, if we now take into consideration the manner in which the faithful honored St. Christopher from the commencement, we will find no connection between the apostolic acts of his life and the symbols under which he has been represented.

His image is that of a gigantic, or rather colossal, saint, whose attitude expresses neither doctrine, nor penance, nor martyrdom. He does not pray, he does not speak, he does

not suffer. Nevertheless, he is not motionless in his glory; he marches across waters, bearing the infant Christ on his shoulders.

Assuredly, in this image of the confessor of the Faith, nothing recalls his apostolate or his martyrdom. This representation being in nowise applicable to the events of the life of St. Christopher, it evidently can refer only to his name. Now, since an expression has been given to this name, really symbolic, which cannot regard the past, it must necessarily refer to the future.

This fact implies, forcibly, the existence of a prophecy for a long time forgotten; of a mysterious announcement, the origin of which is at present unknown, but upon which has necessarily been founded the sculptural type of St. Christopher, such as it was first produced by the East, and such as it is still preserved in the south of Christian Europe. From these circumstances it is permissible to infer that this prophecy was probably cotemporaneous with the martyrdom of St. Christopher. It would not be impossible that this figure was literally the reproduction, in stone, of the prophecy of the saint who first took the name of *Christ-bearer* (Christopher), and would have announced that one day a great man, bearing also "Christ" in his name, would effectually transport the Law of Jesus Christ across the ocean-sea. This would explain how Oriental genius, giving to the holy martyr the emblem of the holy voyager announced, has produced, in sculpture, the form of a colossal man, in relation with his gigantic work. By a unique exception in sacred iconography, and the usages of religion, popular piety adopted these figurative symbols of the future. The Church welcomed the colossal effigies of St. Christopher, which, in rendering homage to the giant martyr of the Faith, represented the future apostolate of a great man who would bear "Christ" in his very name.

To every serious mind, it becomes evident, 1st, That a mysterious tradition has occasioned the figure of this symbolic statue announcing the future in place of recalling the

past, and therefore deprived of all the mementoes of the apostolic life and of the martyreal palm of St. Christopher, and represented him solely where he never was, on sea, and made him crossing waves, whereas he evangelized only on land; 2d, That the knowledge of this prophecy, the cause of the colossal effigy, being lost, there was afterwards a pious legend composed, which underwent alterations and variations, according to the times and the places. It remains certain that the far East was the original source of this tradition, and that it was there the first churches and first statues were raised in honor of St. Christopher.

Now in what manner was St. Christopher first represented? How did the iconographic chisel of the statuary write the name? The facts will give the answer.

St. Christopher is invariably represented under the form of a giant bearing the infant Jesus on his shoulders, passing the sea without being completely wetted, and supporting himself on a verdant tree having its top and its roots.

Let us analyze this emblem, and the results will easily enable us to find the signification of the whole.

This giant saint is a very good Christian, a hero of Catholicity. He carries beyond the sea the infant Jesus, — that is to say, the dawn of the Gospel on the new land. The little Jesus holds in His hand the globe of the earth, surmounted with the Cross. This sphericity of the globe epitomizes in advance the whole system of the Discovery. The cross surmounting the globe announces the diffusion of the Gospel among all peoples. The Catholic giant, with his forehead encircled with a halo of glory, the indication of sanctity, supports himself, in traversing the billows, on the trunk of a flowering tree bearing leaves and fruit, which at once reminds us of the flowering rod of Aaron, the root of Jesse, the trunk of the tree of Salvation, — that wood which has saved the world. It is to be noticed that this tree, towards its top, has date-bearing branches, which is characteristic of the Orient, and at its foot fibrous roots, the sign of transplantation, of new culture. Besides, the

old Latin device of St. Christopher, expressing the generosity of this giant apostle, who has the gentleness of a dove, and the Good News of which he is the bearer, reads thus: "QUI TE MANE VIDENT, NOCTURNO TEMPORE RIDENT." These words evidently imply future movement, a subsequent voyage, and can in nowise be referred to the past.

In the course of time, after the invasion of the Vandals, who were Arians, this colossal statue having become unintelligible to many minds in Germany and other countries, there was a legend composed which may explain this figure, and connect it with the life of St. Christopher. By degrees, the accessories of this effigy were modified: in place of a missionary bearing the Christ, a hermit was represented, carrying, gratuitously, travellers on his shoulders across a deep river. Such an employment at that time, when there existed but few bridges or ferry-boats, may have been of great utility. St. Christopher, on account of his strong shoulders, has been supposed to be the predecessor of the confraternity of bridge-builders modestly devoted to this good work, following the example of the young shepherd, St. Benezet, to whom the country of Venaissin owed the bridge of Avignon. It has been said that, to try him, Jesus Christ, under the form of a child, came one night to him, to beg him to take Him across the river, which had been swelled by the recent rains, and that the saint, taking Him on his back, recognized, by His weight becoming more and more heavy, that he bore the Master of the World.

The mysterious tradition, and the colossal effigy which consecrated it in the churches of the East, took thus, in coming amid the woods of Germany, and the fogs of the shores of the North, the character of a commonplace legend, — a Christian anecdote, to beguile the long evenings of winter. Paintings having conformed to the variations of legendary tradition, the sea was finally replaced by a river. On one side is a hermit, with relics in his hand, near a chapel with its bell-tower; on the other, a brave German

on horseback, going to a mill, the water-wheel of which is seen.

It is not in the north of Europe, then, that we ought to seek the exact representation of the colossal statue of St. Christopher. To find it, we must return towards the south, adjacent to the country where it originated. There St. Christopher is, indeed, the giant who carries Christ, and passes the great sea or ocean, having water only to his waist, holding, in place of a staff, the mystic tree which is to be transplanted, or even holding in his hand a cross, which he takes to the other side of the sea.

It is a curious circumstance that the churches, the images, and the name of St. Christopher are more spread in the south than in the north, and among the populations of the shores than among those of the interior districts. Among all Christian countries, Spain was the one in which were most multiplied the effigies, the churches, and the chapels of St. Christopher. Certainly no other nation in Europe possessed as anciently, or on as many altars, relics of this martyr, or raised higher statues to this holy giant who was to pass the sea.

So an ancient tradition, for a long time unheeded — ascending at least to the twelfth century, and recalled by Columbus * after his third voyage — had pointed out Spain as the country that was to accomplish a great religious mission. In his “Natural and Moral History of the Indies,” Father Acosta, whose profound and comprehensive views Humboldt has noted, says, also, “that it has been predicted for a long time that the New World was to be converted to Jesus Christ by the Spanish nation.” Is it not strange, that a country confined between mountains and the sea, and which, therefore, could extend itself only by the ocean, should be designated for this evangelical work! This idea of an evangelic action beyond the GLOOMY OCEAN, is it not astonishing!

* *Libro de las Profecias*, fol. iv.

It was, in fact, from Spain, a country in which St. Christopher was so much honored, that the messenger of the Good News departed to carry the Cross beyond the ocean.

And it is so natural to see in the Catholic mission of Columbus the interpretation of the emblematic figure of St. Christopher, that the first geographer of the epoch of the Discovery, Juan de la Cosa, in finishing his map of the New World, in place of naming the conqueror of the GLOOMY OCEAN, contented himself with painting the symbolic figure of the saint who bears Christ on his shoulders across the sea.* In his estimation, the prediction contained in this religious image was already realized.

In fact for more than ten centuries the colossal statue we have been speaking of expressed, in relief, the act of piety which was one day to put the old world in possession of the new one.

It is also to be remarked, that since the Discovery the statues of St. Christopher are less colossal, and the churches dedicated to him less numerous, than before that epoch. Those that existed already are preserved; it is but rarely that new ones are dedicated to him. Now the gigantic effigy has received its true interpretation. Henceforward the palm of his triumph, the crown of his victory, can be rendered to the Syrian martyr, St. Christopher. It remains to us to venerate in him only the martyr of Jesus Christ, and probably the author, or the occasion of the mysterious prophecy, with the accomplishment of which Christopher Columbus was charged.

*M. Ferdinand Denis thinks Juan de la Cosa sought, in this effigy, to reproduce the very countenance of Christopher Columbus. We are wholly of his opinion; and the editor of Herrera undoubtedly participated in it in advance, for, in his publication of 1628, the portrait appears to be but simply an enlargement of the miniature likeness of St. Christopher, placed at the head of the map of Juan de la Cosa.

SECTION IX.

One cannot judge of Columbus as he would of the Emperor Henry III., Louis XIV., Cromwell, or the great Frederic.

This man is not wholly explicable by the facts of observation, since extraordinary events, and a concourse of marvellous coincidences, enter into his enterprises as a navigator, and into his administrative acts, and that the spirit that animated him, and his religious character, make him partake more of heaven than of earth.

The contemplator of the Word, the herald of the Cross, the liberator in hope of the Holy Sepulchre, bears in all his habitudes the mark of his apostolate. The ambassador of God to unknown nations is distinguished among all men by the character of his august career.

There is something of the mysterious and the sublime mixed up with his life: the dramatic and the poetic enter into his existence. Everything that comes in contact with this man acquires dignity or confers distinction. By their persistence, or their excess even, his tribulations pertain to the domain of the epopee, as much as to that of history. Some miserable, envious, and ungrateful wretches, whom their mediocrity destined to forgetfulness, appertain to history, for the very reason that they attacked the Herald of the Cross. Their names remain to be in eternal disgrace.

But those who served faithfully this good master, gain immortality by their connection with him. Their names cannot be effaced from the pages of history. Everything that belongs to him, or is connected with him, becomes increased in glory or in utility; so much so, that the titles of nobility accorded to his brothers cannot exalt them. That of brothers to Columbus far surpasses their letters-patent. His faithful squire, Diego Mendez, obtained armorial bearings. His faithful steward, Pedro de Terreros, wounded mortally in defending him, had in advance received a title to immortality. Columbus reserved for him

the honor of being the first European that trod the New Continent. His Indian interpreter, Diego Colon, a poor idolater, was, after he was baptized, married to the sister of the noblest sovereign of Hispaniola. His Spanish interpreter, Cristobal Rodriguez, surnamed *La Lengua*, acquired great honors. His domestics became officers; his officers navigators. His first pilots attain to celebrity; others are placed in important posts or in honorable employments, like Sanchez de Carvajal, who was appointed body-guard. The devotedness of his countryman Barthelemy Fieschi, has eternally associated him with the glory of his last expedition.

If he had had no relations with Columbus, who would have remembered the jurisconsult Nicolas Oderigo, although temporarily charged with a mission by the Republic of Genoa? and even would the generous Dominican Diego de Deza, and the learned Carthusian Gaspard Gorricio, be known beyond the other side of the Pyrenees? After having charmed the erudite Court of Isabella, Peter Martyr would have been forgotten for the last three centuries, if, to guard against the effects of time, he had not spoken of Columbus. By the fascination of his conversation, the Revealer of the Globe led Doctor Garcia Hernandez, of Palos, and Doctor Chanca, of Seville, to visit the newly-discovered regions; and their confidence in him has saved them from inevitable forgetfulness. By conversing with the first clerk of Juanato Berardi, Columbus made a cosmographer of him. He raised this book-keeper, who was named Amerigo Vespucci, almost to the height of a rival.

In like manner, for having generously welcomed the traveller, then unknown, when he came, poor and way-worn, to the monastery of La Rabida, the Seraphic Order, aspiring only to the privileges of humility, sees itself invested with honors which were refused to science; and until the end of time it will participate in the glory of the Discovery. The sons of St. Francis have received the reward or prize of the valiant. The first priest who celebrated the holy

Sacrifice on the ocean was a Franciscan; the first priest who trod on the newly-discovered land was a Franciscan; and the first priest who preached in the Indian language the name of the Redeemer, who promulgated the Law of Jesus Christ, and the authority of the holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, was a Franciscan.

The Seraphic Order had the honor of conferring the first baptism, of founding the first convent, and of furnishing the first bishop for Hispaniola, as it had the honor of drawing from its bosom the first martyr which the Apostolate counts in the expanded spaces of the ocean.

In sober truth, this man appearing on the scene of the world during the era of the Revival of Learning, borrows nothing from the epoch; he outstrips it as regards intuition and science; but the full, implicit, and ardent faith of the middle ages, with its militant and chivalrous character, is in him. Still, he so participates in the primitive and fundamental characteristics of Catholicity, that he reminds us of a hero of the Gospel, a prophet radiant with holiness, an august patriarch, rather than of a knight-errant of the Holy Land. Vainly has profane learning, lately resuscitated by the invention of printing, with its mythological allusions, its recollections of metamorphoses, invaded Castile, seduced some gifted minds in Italy and France, and even attempted to find an entrance into the Eternal City. Columbus never enters into any league or compact with error. No expression, no form of thought, betrays, on his part, the least concession to the infatuation of so many of his cotemporaries. In his relations with the propagators of Greek and of pure Latinity, the disciple of St. Francis remains what he was in his childhood in Genoa, and afterwards on sea,—the pupil of pure Catholicity. This respect for his faith, this orthodoxy of language, tells better than any commentary could, to what a point the disciple of the Gospel had profoundly penetrated into the meaning of divine things, and how abiding the consciousness of his mission was in him.

Never did the disciple of the Crucified compare himself to

the great geniuses of Greece and Rome, or to the celebrities of profane antiquity. If he compares his destiny with those of some others, it is to the great men of the Old and the New Testament that, in his modesty, he seems to allude. One time he seems to support the firmness of his faith, the boldness of his enterprise, by the example of St. Peter. Twice he compares the graces lavished on him by the Divine Majesty to the favors Moses and David had received. But it was particularly with the mission of the legislator of the Hebrews that the Messenger of Salvation compared his own.

Had he strong reasons for these comparisons, most respectful, and assuredly, in his thoughts, far removed from all personal vanity? The want of space prevents us from examining this question. We simply see some exterior traits of similitude between Columbus and the Chief of the Apostolate. In different languages, the one and the other had received the same family name. St. Peter was son of the Dove, and Christopher of Columbus, which also means a Dove. The former received from Christ a name which signified that he would bear the Church; the latter received from the Church a name which signified that he would bear Christ. St. Peter represented the fixity of the basis, the immutability of the foundation; Christopher Columbus represented the expansion of the Church, the propagation of the Faith.

Afterwards, if we consider the most salient points of comparison between the destiny of Moses and that of Columbus, it will appear that these two extraordinary men have equally accomplished providential missions: That of Moses, attested by the Church, is recognized equally by Jews and by Christians. That of Columbus, attested by evidence, will one day be recognized by all men of good faith.

At the time appointed by Providence, fifteen hundred years before the time of Jesus Christ, Moses organizes or gives a constitution to the people of God, who had been

oppressed and enfeebled by bondage, establishes the true doctrine, the worship of the one only true God, and isolates his people, in order to preserve them the better from the contagion of idolatry.

At the time appointed by Providence, fifteen hundred years after the time of Jesus Christ, Christopher Columbus enlarges the known surface of the earth, brings nations, as it were, nearer each other, and expands the domain of the Catholic Church.

Both of these men bear names that are highly symbolic.

Both of them were forty years old when they commenced the execution of their respective divine mandates. Moses had to quit his wife Sephora, in order to attend to his mission. Columbus keeps far away from Beatrix, in order to accomplish his.

The sea opens its waters to give a passage to Moses; the ocean smooths its deep waters to give a passage to the ships of Columbus.

Moses brought a new Law, the Law of the Covenant, to the chosen people. Columbus brought the New Law, the Law of Grace, to the called peoples. The former applied the temporary law with its severe inflexibility; the latter the law of grace, of mercy, and of charity.

Moses triumphed by the sign of the Cross over the obstacles raised against him by the carnal-minded. He prefigured this sign with his arms extended and raised on the mountain, and with the post in the form of the Greek letter *Tau*, upon which he exposed the brazen serpent. Columbus triumphed over others and over himself by the sacred sign he carried in his heart and in his name; and which he held in his hand in putting his foot on the frontier of the New World.

These two mandatories from on high, diversely occupied, received visible marks of divine assistance, and were succored supernaturally with aids proportioned to the difference of the times and the places.

In recompense for his perils and his excessive fatigues,

and for the liberty given to his people, Moses had to encounter contentions, menaces, conspiracies, riots, and the defection of his kinsmen. In return for the increase of terrestrial domain, for the donations given to science, to the human intellect, and for the riches he bestowed on Spain, Columbus had to bear with revolts, desertions, destitution, chains, poverty, and calumny!

Moses desired to see God face to face, as he had the happiness of hearing Him and of speaking to Him. Columbus desired to see Him in the wonders of His works, and to know Him by His exterior creation, as he had felt within him His omnipotence.

Moses aspired to conduct his people to the promised land; Columbus aspired to open to all the nations of the earth access to the Holy Sepulchre.

Neither the one nor the other attained the object of his wishes. The names of both these men will be perpetuated to the end of the human race.

The wonders operated in favor of Columbus, in the broad light of history and of printing, render perfectly credible, even to philosophers of good faith, the miracles that were wrought in behalf of the people of God, and the accomplishment of His intentions among the idolatrous nations, at a period when material and decisive signs supplied the place of the authority of the words of grace and of love, ever since manifested in the Gospel dispensation.

The gigantic labors of Columbus, the Cyclopean character of his voyages, the astonishing boldness of his investigations, the strange coincidences in his career, and the prodigious signs of the assistance he received from on high, in addition to the force of his style, make him ascend to the heroic ages of primitive times; and he would seem to be an emblematic figure, the form of a hierophant, if his evangelic tenderness, his ardent Catholicity, did not unite him with ourselves. The reason is, because in the midst of his functions, maritime, administrative, and regal, and in the multiplicity of affairs which too often absorb one's whole

life, and leave the soul no time for reflecting on eternal things, Columbus did not cease from acting as if in the presence of God. It was, therefore, that his virtue surpassed the bounds of human force, and was able to elevate itself to that constant height in which divine grace alone sustains the feebleness of the mortal being. In thoroughly analyzing this character, in submitting to a minute criticism the actions and the intentions of this Herald of the Cross, one necessarily comes to recognize in him a virtue so constant, so thorough, that it appears to form his very being; one scarcely dares to call it by the commonplace and too often hackneyed name of virtue, and he is on the point of calling it sanctity.

All the saints have not got to heaven by the same paths. In the same way that there are many mansions in the Kingdom of the Celestial Father, there are many ways for attaining to sanctity.

Amid the engagements of secular life, Columbus could not limit himself to prayer, to the offices of choir, to mortifications, or to interior perfectionment, like cloistered religious, but he strove with all his might to carry their spirit of self-denial, their zeal for the service of God and the salvation of their neighbor, into the exercise of his public duties. His authority was more than once compromised, and his life exposed on account of the evangelical gentleness from which he would not depart even in the midst of the gravest dangers. In truth, as chief of a maritime expedition, Columbus never shed a single drop of blood. Now, until his time, all exploring expeditions had been marked by the effusion of blood. Before commanding or governing others, he strove to govern himself; his empire over the natural violence of his character, proves with what perseverance he had combated against himself.

Columbus was gentle, and humble of heart. Far from attributing to himself any merit on his return from his first voyage, he showed himself astonished at having accomplished it in so easy a manner. It is to the sole bounty of

God that he renders homage for his success. Such was constantly his humility, that he never consented to have his name given to any land, to any island, or to any ship, while his mates were very anxious to give their names at least to some caravels. His modesty and his evangelical gentleness are seen in the manner in which he received the lowly, according to the world, the inferior employés, the sailors, and even down to the cabin-boys. It is known that the cabin-boys were not afraid to talk to him, and that he used to converse kindly with them, in imitation of the Divine Master, who desired that little children should come near him.

Columbus was remarkable particularly for his affectionate regard for the sick. The forgiveness of injuries done him was not simply natural to his generosity of character; he carried it so far, and rendered so truly evangelical his pardon of his enemies, that he pleaded for them, suffered for them, and paid out of his pocket for them.

His unswerving attachment to the Catholic faith, his provident solicitude for the Papacy, could not have been surpassed by any member of the Holy Roman Church. In his carelessness about personal glory, while he neglected to write and print the history of his discoveries, in order to transmit it to posterity, he prepared expressly for the Sovereign Pontiff a lengthy account of his Christian expeditions. This pious regard which he showed for the Holy Father, he did not show for temporal sovereigns. This simple fact proves once more how little he was governed by human considerations. The firm and ardent desire Columbus had of delivering the Holy Sepulchre, of making the tomb of the Saviour honored by all the nations of the earth, in order thus to serve for the piety of the faithful as much as his discoveries had served for the interests of Christianity and civilization, — are not these the part of a true Hero of the Gospel?

His noble projects of discovery, his conquests in the regions of the unknown, of scientific truths, altered in noth-

ing his child-like devotion to the Blessed Virgin, whose honor he tenderly loved, nor his filial piety toward St. Francis, the glorious founder of the Order, which had given him the first shelter and the first assistance. If the testimonies of his fervor and moral purity were not clearly evident from all the facts of his life, his familiar relations with the most learned and pious religious of his time would sufficiently show the state of perfection he arrived at, and in which he implored of God the grace to serve Him.

This *ensemble* of aspirations, of disinterested calculations, of Christian enterprises and of pious acts, form such a concert, that we cannot find engaged in the world another Christian as great by faith, by constancy in trials, and by resignation to the divine will, as he was.

What shows beyond a doubt that the Revealer of the Globe was not only chosen for the Discovery, but that following the Lord he walked in the narrow way with a firm step, is this: that his work being accomplished, the succors of God did not desert him. On the contrary, the favors he receives are multiplied with his labors and needs. The more he advances in age, the more he advances in Christian perfection, and the more sensible he is of the miraculous assistance he receives. The coöperative action of Providence is not only sensible to Columbus, but it becomes manifest to all those who observe him with eyes that will look at the light. But in proportion as, fortified by trials and invisible succors, he becomes capable of bearing much suffering, his tribulations increase with a grievous profusion, and are multiplied and proportioned to his greatness. And still no complaint for his afflictions escapes from the Herald of the Cross. His capability of suffering becomes immense, like his love. His serenity of spirit to his last hour, his angelic calm in his last agony, his conversation commenced in heaven before his mortal spirit quitted the earth, his wonderful beginning and his edifying end, — do not all these show that Columbus was one of the predestinate!

Columbus possessed, visibly, the three Theological Virtues. He practised, constantly, the four Cardinal Virtues. The Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost appeared descended on him, and we have found God admirable in him, as He is always in His saints.

After a serious examination of the facts, it is difficult to conceive that this adorer in spirit and in truth, this contemplator of the Word, this man of mercy, who pardoned his enemies, even his tormentors, who remained poor in the midst of riches which he could easily have acquired, if he had not been sparing of pains and tears to others,—that this precursor of the Good News, this herald of the Cross, so much favored by God, should not be among the number of His elect in heaven, after having been manifestly so on earth.

SECTION X.

To what order do the facts we have been mentioning belong? Do they appertain to the world, or to sanctity? If one had not read all that precedes, in simply seeing this chapter, would he not think we were treating of one of the blessed, or transcribing some pages from the life of a saint?

As for our own part, our opinion in this regard has been fixed for a long time. At first sufficiently expressed in 1843, in our book entitled "*THE CROSS IN THE TWO WORLDS*," it has since been corroborated by a special study of the epoch of the Discovery, and of the life and character of Columbus. Our first presentiments have been confirmed; and, considering the Revealer of the Globe as worthy of the respect of the whole human race (for, without the authorization of the Church, we dare not say its veneration), we attach a pious love to his memory.

This is not enough. We will disclose the profound conviction of our mind. We declare before God, who knows it, and before men, who do not know it, that **CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS WAS A SAINT.**

We use this word SAINT as far as it is permitted the submissiveness of a Catholic to employ it, as a figure of speech, for want of a more exact term to apply to a man whom the Church has not yet canonized; for, in our eyes, nobody until then is a Saint, in the true acceptance of the word. And when we declare, with full conviction, that Christopher Columbus was a Saint, we mean to say that the Messenger of the Cross is found, as regards history, in the position of a hero of the Gospel, and of a great servant of the Church, upon the merits of whom the Church has not yet pronounced. Some great bishops, martyrs, founders of religious Orders, who are now illustrious canonized saints, have remained, temporarily, in an equal situation, awaiting the day of their canonization.

Doubtless more than one reader will be surprised, or perhaps scandalized, at the boldness of this assertion; but we can assure them neither the august Chief of Christianity, nor the princes of the Church, will be at all astonished at our words. When lately, in Rome, we rendered homage to the moral and religious purity of Columbus, and declared his grandeur, our voice received, in the places of the pontificate, only friendliness and encouragement. The immortal Pius IX., the first pope who traversed the ocean, and dwelt in the land discovered by Columbus, knows his great piety, his providential mission, and the earnest desire of the Holy See for his glory. The Sacred College honored the great Cross-bearer of Catholicity. The honor of his name is preserved in the Eternal City. It is not there forgotten that the Revealer of the Globe had the honor of being in epistolary correspondence with three popes successively; that, after his death, three other popes, — namely, Leo X., Gregory XIV., and Innocent IX., — accepted the dedications of works in which were mentioned the divine spirit that filled and animated Columbus. It is there also remembered, that, in imitation of the Papacy, the cardinalate also protected and fostered his glory; and that at divers times the cardinals inspired and encouraged the poems which

Italy published in praise of this Christian, then almost unknown to the world.

The Franciscans of Rome have given an asylum to the imperishable memory of this man. The friendship of Father Juan Perez de Marchena for Columbus has been transmitted in the Seraphic Order. The Franciscans of the Conventual Minors, the religious of the Observance, the Capuchins, remain the faithful hosts of his memory. And, on their side, the Dominicans have not forgotten him. There still can be found among them, to this day, more than one Diego de Deza to defend his worth and his glory; foremost among whom is their admirable General, the Rev. Father Jandel, of whom France justly feels proud.*

We repeat it, then: the Herald of the King of Glory is, in the presence of the Church, in the expecting position of one of the Blessed before his beatification.

And why should we not say it, inasmuch as we have the presentiment of it? The day will undoubtedly come when the superior virtue which God caused to shine in the Messenger of Salvation will be solemnly declared by the Vicar of Jesus Christ, exercising the spiritual authority of the world; and the Church herself will add a title to the names so wonderfully significative, which the elect of Providence already bore. The sanctity of Christopher Columbus being declared, nothing will thenceforth be wanting in the rehabilitation of this hero. It is to the Papacy that it appertains, at a seasonable time, to decide, in its wisdom, on that aureola which would be the only worthy crowning of such a glory.

But perhaps it will be said: a saint works miracles; miracles are preëminently the signs of sanctity. Now, Columbus has not wrought miracles.

*In this connection it may not be irrelevant to mention, that the translator, or rather compiler, of this work, is, notwithstanding his unworthiness to be so, a Tertiary, or member of the Third Order of the Dominicans. — B.

Who will prove this?

On what grounds could one deny these miracles? Who has shown that the Herald of the Cross never worked miracles? We, for our part, adduce proof that, after the prodigies effected during his life, he has, since his death, wrought miracles.

God has willed that the sign of Redemption, the Cross, which was so lovingly borne by Columbus to the New World, should render testimony to the virtue and sanctity of His messenger, and that some particular graces should be manifested to the admiration and veneration of Christians, by a cross erected in Hispaniola by Christopher Columbus, as a mark of his tender piety to the Saviour of men.

This merits particular mention.

SECTION XI.

In the beginning of April, 1495, Columbus visited, for the second time, the *Vega Real* (the Royal Plain), in Hispaniola, where, the preceding year, he had halted, seized with admiration, blessing God publicly, at the head of his troops, and thanking Him for having shown him such beauties. After the submission of Guarionex, the sovereign of the country, the Admiral obtained from him authorization to erect a fortress at the pass, or entrance, to this beautiful country. Desiring to honor the sign of Salvation in this charming place, he gave orders to Alonzo de Valencia, a mate of a caravel, to take twenty men with him, and cut down a superb tree he had chosen, to form a cross from it. The trunk, perfectly squared, formed the shaft of the cross; and the largest limb, put across, represented the arms. This large cross, of remarkable height, was elevated by Columbus on a hill at the foot of the mountains, whence the sight embraced, with an immense horizon, the most magnificent view of this magnificent plain.

Columbus, applying his innate talent as an engineer to

the construction of the fortress, of which he had drawn the plan, sojourned for some time in this place, to which he had given the name of *Immaculate Conception*. The fortress, and the adjoining country, were called by the same name, or simply *Conception*. During the execution of the works, having no priest or no church near him, he every day said his prayers before this cross. He collected the workmen and the soldiers there, for the like purpose, every morning and evening. It was near this sacred sign that he regularly recited his office. The Revealer of the Globe had a particular affection for this cross. Like the Psalmist, seeking the Lord and praising His works in the middle of the night,* often he came there in the obscure glimmering of the stars. At the foot of this cross, the symbol of eternal life, he used to become absorbed in ineffable contemplations. The sight of the stars, gravitating harmoniously in ether, would act in a heavenly manner on his soul, as if he heard, at that distance, the melody of the celestial choirs. Undoubtedly his intuition of mystic things became enlarged under the tuition of this sign which he had erected with a sincere piety, and with which God appeared to be pleased. We see in the history of a Spaniard, the celebrated St. Ignatius Loyola, that one day, while he prayed near a cross, on the road from Manreza to Barcelona, all that he had before known of religion was “put before his eyes in so clear a light, that the truths of faith seemed to him to have nothing obscure about them.”† It appears that interior illuminations enlightened also Christopher Columbus in this place; for he sojourned there by predilection, although he was camped there as if engaged in war.

Conception was, of all the places in Hispaniola, that in which he remained the longest time. He had there neither family, nor society, nor conveniences for intellectual pur-

* “Media nocte surgebam ad confitendum tibi, super judicia justificationes tuæ.” — *Psalm cxviii.*, v. 62.

† F. Bouhours. — *Life of St. Ignatius*, Book I.

suits; but sublime compensations were given to his state of isolation. So he returned again with eagerness to Conception on his return from his third voyage, after his discovery of Trinidad and the new continent. After he had appeased the troubles excited by Roldan, leaving his brother Diego Governor of San Domingo, and the Adelantado overseeing the province of Xaragua, he returned to the splendid solitude of Conception. He sojourned there for several consecutive months, and was there still when Bobadilla landed in the island and dispossessed him of its government. This constancy and this attachment cannot otherwise be explained than by spiritual consolations and favors. It was there that he had especially invoked the Blessed Trinity: he says so himself. So he desired to consecrate this place by the erection of a church, in which three masses were to be daily celebrated: the first, in honor of the Blessed Trinity; the second, in honor of the Immaculate Conception; and the third, for the faithful departed.*

When the Revealer of the Globe, in recompense for his discoveries, was deprived of his government and sent to Spain in chains, the Castilians, accustomed by his example to pray at the foot of this Cross, continued to come there. One day, the aid of this Cross being invoked with a sincere faith, it wrought a miracle. Those who had fevers were cured by touching it. This prodigy attracted other patients, other suffering Christians, who recommended themselves earnestly to God. A great many of them were cured. Hence it came that this Cross was called *THE TRUE CROSS*; for it was distinguished from other crosses by miracles.

The name and the prodigies of *THE TRUE CROSS* spread to a distance. The Indians, oppressed by the Spaniards since the new government of Bobadilla, noticing the veneration of their new masters for this sign, resolved to destroy

*Testamento y Codicilio del Almirante Don Cristobal Colon otorgado en Valladolid a 19 Mayo del año 1506.

it. They came to it in large force, and, attaching strong ropes* to the shaft of the Cross, tried with all their might to pull it down; but their numbers, no more than their efforts, could do anything with it. The Cross remained immovable, defying their strength. Mortified at their failure, they tried to destroy it by fire. Having collected a large lot of dry brush-wood, they came at night, and, surrounding the Cross with the inflammable fagots to a considerable height, set fire to them. The fire burned with great force. The Cross soon disappeared in the flames and smoke. The idolaters, with their priests, the Bohutis, went away satisfied; but the next morning they perceived the Cross subsisting entire, and perfectly preserved amid the smoking cinders. Its natural color even was not altered, "except that at the foot there appeared a little dark spot, as if one had approached it with a lighted candle."†

Amazed and frightened at this miraculous power, they ran away trembling with terror, fearing they had incurred its wrath, persuaded that it came from Heaven. Still, the violent spite of their Bohutis made them return to the charge, to try to cut it down with their hatchets. They found in the wood an unusual resistance; they saw that as soon as they cut out a chip the void became filled again,‡ and that they had to recommence the work. The desperation of their obstinacy yielded before this new prodigy. Remembering that their numbers were powerless not only to pull down the Cross, but even to move it, and seeing that the Christians testified a veneration for this sign, they also thenceforth used to prostrate themselves at the sight of it.§

To these prodigies there was another one, permanent and visible to all, whose evidence increased with each year: that of its perfect preservation from decay, without

* Oviedo y Valdez. *La Historia Natural y General de las Indias*, lib. III., cap. v.

† F. Charlevoix. *Histoire de Saint Domingue*, tom. I., liv. VI.

‡ Oviedo y Valdez. *Hist. Nat. y Gen. de las Indias*, lib. III., c. V.

§ *Ibid.*

being covered with tar or any chemical coating that could have resisted the action of the humidity and extreme heat of that climate, which so promptly produces rottenness. This Cross became neither split nor warped, nor attacked with insects or worms. One would have said that it was just newly raised. Fifty-eight years after its erection, the TRUE CROSS was as undamaged as it was on the first day. Another marvel which struck especially the inhabitants of that country was to see standing, respected by the hurricanes and the water-spouts,* this Cross, while the adjacent trees and the houses in the neighborhood had been uprooted and overthrown.

The recital of these prodigies, and the sight of the miraculous cures effected by it, drew to the TRUE CROSS a large concourse of the colonists. They used to invoke the aid of the TRUE CROSS, and make pilgrimages to it. Many, verifying the prodigy of the renewing of the wood, with their knives cut off portions of it, which they carried away with them; every day new cuts were made in it. Yet it was piety, rather than curiosity, that inspired these religious larcenies. Small portions of the TRUE CROSS were placed in reliquaries and carried to other parts of Hispaniola, to other colonies of the New World, and even to Castile. "God ordered matters so as to warrant and show that He was pleased with the piety of the faithful, in venerating what He had done to confound the sacrilege attempted by the Indians." †

This standing miracle, together with the numberless cures effected, and the resort to Conception, gave to the renown of the TRUE CROSS an unbounded notoriety. As human infirmity shows itself everywhere where there are men, it appears that certain clergymen, taking advantage of the piety of the faithful, received numerous offerings destined for the TRUE CROSS, but did not apply them according to

* Oviedo y Valdez. *Hist. Nat. y Gen de las Indias*, lib. III., c. v.

† F. Charlevoix. *Hist. de Saint Domingue*, tom. I., liv. VI.

the intentions of the pilgrims and the sick. The Emperor Charles V., having been informed of this abuse, ordered the treasurer of the Bishop of Conception to be careful to employ the sums given to honor the VERY HOLY CROSS for the intentions or purposes of the donors, because he knew they were not so applied. In the year 1525, Charles V., to honor also in his turn the VERY HOLY CROSS, ordered the previous deduction, for four years, of the sum of twenty thousand maravedis from the fines coming to the Crown, to contribute personally to the embellishment of the site and environs of the Very Holy Cross, "LA SANTISSIMA CRUZ," and for rendering them more appropriate for the respect and veneration due to it." *

The miracles operated by the TRUE CROSS multiplying, and rendering it more and more celebrated, Spain became moved at the number and splendor of prodigies so well authenticated. The Emperor wrote about the matter to the Holy Father, praying him to be pleased to authorize the devotion of the faithful to this Cross, and to grant indulgences to those who would make pilgrimages to it and bring offerings for his intentions.†

But, as the Herald of the Cross was not named in the imperial missive, and that it spoke only of a Cross which *they* erected near Conception, the Sovereign Pontiff, in his prudence, was not in a hurry to accede to the wishes of the Emperor. The Holy See and theologians in general do not accord much confidence to prodigies due to *they*. This power, which is so commonly asserted and invoked by German philosophers, — this *they*, which was in such high credit with writers of the eighteenth century, — has not yet become an authority for Rome. The Church does not recognise the merits of *they*, and believes but little in miracles operated by the plural.

In fact, in the history of the Old Testament we do not

* Herrera. *Hist. Gen. de las Indias Occid.*, Decad. III., lib. VIII., cap. X.

† *Ibid.*

see a single miracle mentioned without the name of its author: also, in the primitive history of the Apostolate, there is no trace of a miracle without the name of the worker of it; and even, when for causes reserved in the secrets of Providence, the miracle is operated by a plurality of persons, the names, the quality of these chosen persons, is never a secret. Their plurality can always be reduced to distinct singular numbers. They are the sons of Aaron, the priests, or the prophets; or the apostles, or the disciples, and afterwards saints or religious corporations inheriting their spirit, — but it is never the public, the crowd, the *they*, that operate the miracle. When God, according to the petitions of those who pray unitedly, He does not for this reason confer miraculous power on numbers — on the anonymous. He works miracles for them, but not by them: such is ordinarily the case.

Certainly miracles have been seen wrought in this or that chapel, at such or such an altar, without any one being able to point out the cause, that is to say, the personal reason or instrumentality, and without knowing to whose merits the favor was due. Nevertheless, generally speaking it is by an individual the miracle is obtained, which is for the advantage of several, and then *they* can have no pretensions to it.

However the case may be, Rome, in her prudence, waited for ampler information. Perhaps, also, she desired that time should come to the proof of these prodigies. But the new discoveries in the New World, the conquest of Mexico, that of Peru, the rapid progress of the Portuguese in South America and in the East Indies, caused Spain to neglect her first colony. In the following years, some cause which is completely unknown to us occasioned the cessation of the prodigy of the renewing of the wood of the TRUE CROSS of Conception. Yet the touching of it still operated miracles; and as the pious avidity of pilgrims continued to take portions of it away, it diminished from day to day.

To guard it against this religious avidity, the Bishop of Conception had it carried processionally to the cathedral, where it was placed in a chapel. The TRUE CROSS was still there in 1535, at the time that Oviedo, then governor of the citadel of San Domingo, wrote the third book of his *Natural History of the Indies*.

But twenty-nine years after, in 1553, a terrible earthquake destroyed almost entirely the city of Conception. All the stone edifices were overturned, with the exception of one. The cathedral, built of cut stone, fell down from the violence of the succussions. One chapel alone remained unhurt: it was that in which the TRUE CROSS was preserved. It was also remarked that none of the inhabitants who had in their habitations, or about them, portions of the TRUE CROSS, though for a while buried under the ruins of their dwellings, received the least injury.* A remarkable circumstance: the first friends of Columbus, — of him who had erected this miraculous sign, — the Franciscans, were in their church at the moment when the earthquake manifested itself. Thrown down and covered with the materials of the building overturned on them, they still arose protected by an invisible power. None of them received the least hurt. A thing equally remarkable was, that the only house that remained standing after this terrible scourge was the convent of St. Francis, the religious of which possessed a fragment of the TRUE CROSS of Conception. While Father John Baptist Le Pers took on the spot notes for Father Charlevoix, to serve him in writing his History of San Domingo, the spared monastery was still seen standing alone amid the ruins of the city.†

After this disaster, the portion of the population who

* F. Charlevoix. *Hist. de Saint Domingue*, t. I., liv. VI.

† The reader will compare the discriminations made by the earthquake here, with those made by the tempest predicted by Columbus, and mentioned in the second and third Sections of Book IV., and then ask himself if the finger of God was not visible in both these prodigies, or, as we consider them, miracles! — B.

survived it dispersed far and wide. The inhabitants who held most to the soil, went and built the town of La Vega, two leagues south-east of Conception.

What became of the TRUE CROSS after this emigration?

We cannot tell. This terrible overthrow changed the conditions and relations of the country. The episcopal see of Conception was suppressed, and reunited with that of San Domingo. The extension of the colonies of Darien and of Castile d'Or, the discovery of the mines of Mexico and of Peru, by their importance, received the exclusive attention of the Royal Council of the Indies, and Hispaniola was almost abandoned to herself. The English, availing themselves of this negligence, came and attacked and ruined San Domingo. The French, on their side, had made settlements in some parts of the island, without having asked for permission. The connections between Spain and this unhappy colony had diminished to that point that she sent a ship there only every three years! The abuses of power, and the avidity of the local authorities, were pushed to that extent, that the Governor, with the other principal functionaries, used to buy the whole cargo of this ship before it came to anchor, in order to resell it at exorbitant prices.

Amid the disorder and uneasiness of such a situation, and threatened with invasions from English, French, and Dutch adventurers, the communications of the colonists with the interior of the island became less and less frequent, and then ceased. It is not strange that in a country ruined and terrified it was not known what became of the TRUE CROSS, miraculously preserved and preservative, when, at San Domingo, the exact burial-place of Columbus himself was forgotten.

We do not find it surprising that the relations existing between the mission of Columbus and the Cross he erected, should have remained unnoticed by men who even lost sight of the relations existing between Columbus and the Discovery, and who, in very good faith, spoke of his Dis-

covery in the plural, as they did of his miraculous Cross. Who would have dared, under the government of Ovando, to recall the name of Christopher Columbus in connection with the miracles of this Cross? Afterwards, the modesty of his son and successor, Don Diego, the embarrassments caused to the latter by the hereditary hatreds with which he had to contend, and the fear of lending color to the calumnies of his vigilant denouncers, prevented him from mixing his name with the prodigies attributed to the Cross that was erected by his father.

The reality of the miracles of the TRUE CROSS of Conception cannot for a moment be questioned; it is carried to the highest degree of historic certitude, and attains palpable evidence. Not only do the official historiographers mention the facts, but they corroborate them by cotemporary evidences and authentic documents. The consequences of the miracles operated by virtue of this Cross, become the object of administrative correspondence with the authorities of Hispaniola, and of a communication of the Emperor to the Chief of the Church. The notoriety of these prodigies passes the ocean, penetrates into Spain, and is especially spread throughout the New World. And as the name of TRUE CROSS is replete with authority, and as it imposes respect for and reanimates faith, by the miracles it attests, it is first seen implanted in the New Continent.

The name of the city of Vera Cruz has no other origin than the remembrance of the TRUE CROSS honored at Conception. The pretended explanation of the name of Vera Cruz given by some historians, will not bear a close examination. They say that Fernando Cortez named Villa Rica Vera Cruz, because he landed there on Good Friday. If he had wished to have consecrated the remembrance of the day of his landing, he would have called the place AVE CRUX, or rather VEXILLA REGIS, and would not have given it the special name of VERA CRUZ, — TRUE CROSS, — spontaneously bestowed by the populations of Hispaniola on the only Cross in the island that wrought prodigies.

Fernando Cortez was the ablest and most fortunate, and, at the same time, the most humane and most religious of the *Conquistadores*. It must not be forgotten that he was at San Domingo when Columbus landed there, returning from his last voyage; and that, as kinsman to Ovando, young Cortez, probably remaining in his house, had, notwithstanding his youth, noticed the piety of the Admiral. The precocious genius of Cortez neglected no occasion of observation. By many tokens it was seen that he sought success in his imitation of great men, and that he desired to take Columbus for his model. Like him, he elevated the Cross in his ships, and, like him, he also erected crosses and proclaimed the name of Jesus Christ in new countries. It is beyond a doubt that he heard of the miracles of the TRUE CROSS. We know that portions of this Cross were carried in relics to Europe and to the East Indies. In all probability Fernando Cortez had one of these venerated portions inserted in the large Cross he erected in the place which, for this reason, he named THE TRUE CROSS,—LA VERA CRUZ.

If the miracles operated by the TRUE CROSS cannot be denied, it is no less certain that this Cross was erected by Columbus, for his enemy Oviedo acknowledges it was. He wrote his details of the miracles near the places where they were operated; so he speaks of them with the greatest respect. He calls it THE HOLY CROSS of Conception.* He specifies the time when Christopher Columbus erected this Cross. He names the mate who, by order of the Admiral, took command of the squad who were charged with executing the erection of it. This officer, Alonzo de Valencia, was still alive, and residing at San Domingo.

One of the writers living nearest this period, the Abbé Lopez de Gomara, says very plainly that many sick persons were cured by the Cross which Christopher Columbus erected at the time of his second visit to La Vega, and that

* *La Santa Vera Cruz de la ciudad de la Concepcion.*

for this reason it received the name of TRUE CROSS. Portions of it were taken away under the form of relics.* He recalls the fact, that notwithstanding their numbers, the Indians were not able to pull it down. Another witness very important on the subject of this Cross, is Columbus himself. In his Will he designates, in order to have a chapel built there, this place, where he in a special manner invoked the Blessed Trinity; and this place is so familiarly known to his family and friends, that he does not distinguish it by its particular name. He limits himself to recommending that this chapel, dedicated to the Trinity, should be built as near as possible to the very place where he had invoked the Triune God in the plain called Conception.† The notoriety of the place, the modesty of the Admiral, and the remembrance of the interior consolations he had received there, cause him to omit the particulars of it.

The church projected by Columbus could not be built. The obstacles brought by the Court to the execution of its conventions, and the non-payment of the revenues due to him, prevented his heir from fulfilling any of these pious intentions.

The man who had discovered such vast countries, mines of gold, of silver, of copper, beds of pearls, and innumerable other riches; the Christian who burned with the desire of delivering the Holy Sepulchre, and of defending the Papacy; who assigned the tenth of his revenues for the poor, who projected an hospital for the sick, a faculty of theology for the foreign missions, a church in honor of the Immaculate Conception, and a chapel in honor of Ever-Adorable Trinity, — found himself completely deprived of his legitimate opulence. Notwithstanding the ardor of his

* Francisco Lopez de Gomara. *Hist. de las Indias*, cap. xxxiv.

† This chapel in honor of the Trinity ought not to be confounded with the church in honor of the Immaculate Conception, under the invocation of Holy Mary of the Conception, which Columbus had provided for in his Institution of Mayorazgo.

desire, the perpetual Governor-General, the Viceroy of the Indies, could offer to God only this wooden Cross; and God graciously accepted this offering, and was pleased to bless this sole monument which the piety of Columbus could offer in this island, of which he was the discoverer and the donor. The Most High poured down His grace on this Cross, the emblem of the name and of the heart of Columbus. He endowed it with miraculous power, as He had formerly done to the rod of Moses and to the staff of Eliseus. This Cross operated prodigies, cured the diseased, and consoled the afflicted. Its supernatural virtue was manifested even in the parts or portions of it that were taken to a distance. And still nobody, perhaps, among those who were cured, attributed to the Apostle of the Cross the least part of this favor from on High.

This thoughtlessness will not surprise those who will remember that of the ten lepers who were cured, only one returned to the Divine Redeemer to thank Him. It was precisely the character so miraculous of the TRUE CROSS which prevented Columbus from being thought of. How could the public have thought that a man carried away from the island in chains, an ex-governor remaining in disfavor, and afterwards dying in indigence and obscurity, could have counted for anything in the marvellous virtues of this wooden Cross? The people profited by the miraculous benefits of this Cross without thinking of Columbus, in the same way that the Indies were enjoyed without the least spark of gratitude to him. The Revealer of the Globe judged with such accuracy the prejudices that were conceived and circulated against him, that he wrote a few years previously, "I have received so singular a reputation, that if I were to build churches or hospitals it would be said they were caverns for robbers."

Nevertheless, and this deserves to be borne in mind, the first whom the touching of this Cross restored to health were precisely those who, following the example of Columbus, honored the Cross, at the foot of which he was

accustomed to meditate on heavenly things. Without their knowing it, their remembrance of him counted for something in their veneration of this symbol. But such, in fact, was the reputation given to Columbus, — and we have seen how this reputation was brought about, — that among even those whose miraculous cures were due to him, none could have dared to declare loudly that he had recommended himself to him near the Cross which his piety had erected.

However the case may be, no fact is more certain, or better established, than the miracles wrought by this Cross. Nobody can suspect here either fraud or deceit. It is not a doubtful relic, a mysterious object concealed behind some altar, to which access is prevented by a balustrade; it is a simple wooden Cross set up in the open air on a rising ground. For obtaining favors from it, there is no occasion for an intermediary. By the impenetrable means of an invisible power, this wood, conformably to the will of Providence, acts according to the deserts of the suppliant; it operates sometimes on the very spot where faith invokes it, sometimes at great distances, by means of portions of it that have been detached by a pious daring. The subsequent disappearance of this Cross ought not in any degree to impair the historic reality of its effects, or the authenticity of its prodigies. How many glorious relics, objects of the most authorized veneration, have not in like manner, in the vicissitudes of ages, been lost or destroyed!

The renown of Columbus at length commences to arise from the tomb of forgetfulness. We firmly hope that one day the sanctity of the Herald of the Cross to the New World will be vindicated from the aspersions and negligences of so-called history, and that, under the protection of the Papacy, he will receive solemnly the veneration and the homage which the Church awards to the saints of the Lord.

SECTION XII.

Such is the destination of this biography, and its intrinsic value, that even in depriving Columbus of his mandate, and in obstinately refusing to recognize his providential office, his life will not be wanting in presenting to thoughtful minds a high teaching as regards the philosophy of history.

Reduced to himself, the Revealer of the Globe remains still inexplicable, mysterious, and grand, like everything that is not of earth. His life presents a practical lesson of human wisdom and of admirable resignation. How much instruction worthy of imitation does not his example offer!

The man who, next to saving one's soul, accomplished the greatest work of humanity, was also the person who experienced the greatest ingratitude. Unknown and disdained before his Discovery, for a little while admired after his first success, then hated, dispossessed of his government, imprisoned and put in chains for no reason, though restored to liberty, he remains marked with the stroke of regal disfavor. It is in vain that he adds new discoveries and new empires to the lands already given to Spain; no prodigies of munificence or of glory raise him in public opinion. He sees himself abandoned by almost all, because such is the will of the ungrateful King; and he who made Castile the richest nation in the universe, languishes, obscurely, a prey to pecuniary embarrassments, to sufferings of body and of heart, uneasy about his daily bread, and he dies almost unregarded. The accumulation of his reverses exceeds human proportions. His misfortunes almost surpass his glory. Still this man does not murmur: he accuses, he curses nobody; and does not regret that he was born. The people of ancient times would never have conceived this type of a hero. Christianity alone, whose creation he was, can comprehend him.

His example shows us that even in governing one's passions, in fulfilling with love each of his duties, and in

putting in the service of the noblest intentions the most unremitting prudence, nobody is exempt from the ordinary tribulations of life. Genius, glory, sublimity, do not preserve one from the envenomed shafts of calumny ; virtue, the gifts of God, do not deliver man from the conditions of his state of life. Notwithstanding the counsels of the most consummate prudence, it is not in one's power to escape oppression or to flee from injustice. Inexorable time bows us down and breaks us down in its march to eternity. The course of events frustrates our purposes, and turns aside, or uses our forces to our detriment.

The example of Columbus shows that nobody can completely obtain here below the object of his desires. The man who doubled the known space of the earth was not able to attain his object ; he proposed to himself much more than he realized.

Columbus fostered in his thoughts three noble objects of ambition : the discovery of the New World ; the circumnavigation of the Globe ; the deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre.

Of these aspirations of his heart one only was realized, and that scarcely ; for if he discovered the New Continent, he did not have the legitimate satisfaction of giving it his name. A man who had done nothing but collect his conversations, seized on and appropriated to himself this part of his glory, and this unjust possession has not been troubled by succeeding ages ! public indifference has sanctioned this spoliation of heroism ! The Catholic intentions of the Messenger of the Cross were almost wholly ignored by Spain. He was no more recognized as a great Christian than as a great navigator. The injustice of his cotemporaries was transmitted to their descendants, and is perpetuated to our own generation. The obstinacy of error is as stubborn as hell, which, however, will not prevail in the end.

The accumulation of difficulties which Columbus had to surmount in order to accomplish his work, seems renewed, in our days, to prevent rendering him justice. As easy as it

was to bury his glory under the weight of prejudices, and to abandon to a stranger the preëminence of his genius, so much the more difficult is it now to bring minds back to the truth, to remove old prejudices, and to obtain for Columbus his terrestrial rehabilitation.

In the first place, important documents have disappeared from the archives of Spain, since the printing of the *Decades* of Herrera. The rough sketch of the *Book of the Prophecies* has been mutilated. The French occupation under Napoleon I. served as an occasion or pretext for larcenies that are to be much regretted. Some manuscript writings which would have enabled us to show the spiritual grandeurs of Columbus, have disappeared. The learned canon of Plaisance, Pietro Maria Campi, died at the time he was going to consign to writing the edifying end of Christopher Columbus, and the precious papers he had collected were destroyed by the ignorance or the carelessness of his heirs. There is nought even to the very terrestrial rehabilitation of Columbus, or of his very portrait, that does not encounter obstacles of various kinds. Some fantastic figures and ignoble images of him, of a shocking unlikeliness, placed in historic galleries and museums in Europe, are accredited to esteemed names. Every large city in Italy shows us its particular portrait of the Genoese hero.

If the work of Columbus profits the human race collectively, the history of his life is not less useful to every man in particular.

To superficial and worldly minds it shows, to demonstration, the transientness, the nothingness of human things, and the necessity of another life, expounding our present existence, and rewarding or punishing its works. One sees there that the terrestrial stimulants of riches and of renown could not cope with the imminence of the dangers, and the infinity of obstacles over which a firm resolution, like truth, prevailed; and that there is also mingled with the great acts of the role of Columbus something superior and mys-

terious,—as much outside of his genius as it is above his will. This force, which infidelity, and the so-called philosophy of history, call by all kinds of names, save the true one, is called Grace, in the language of Catholicity.

As regards sincere Christians, in recognizing the manifest influence of Grace on the prodigies of the Revealer of the Globe, they will, at the same time, see the highest possible individual glorification of Catholicity. Assuredly, since the commencement of history, no mortal accomplished a work comparable in importance to that of Columbus. The human mind will not be able to conceive, until the end of the world, how another man could execute so prodigious a work. It is also no less evident that the Church alone,—that is to say, the clergy of all degrees of her hierarchy, in the complete representation of her powers and her dignities,—concurred in making the Discovery an accomplished fact. It was the clergy alone that believed in Columbus, when, with all its weight, science harassed him with its objections and its disdains.

By an instinctive consequence of the relations which united to the destinies of Catholicity the sacerdotal heart and the apostolic genius of Columbus, the clergy, who had been the fosterers of his ideas, were the consolers of his afflictions, and remained the defenders of his glory. One would say that, outstripping the science of that period, the clergy felt that the cause of this laic was their own, and that in justifying him they honored themselves. In truth, the life of Columbus places, irrefragably, in the clearest light, the superiority of Catholicity; for one finds in it the contact of the supernatural with man. In honest truth, the Discovery cannot be explained without the admission of supernatural aid, or Grace, as it is agreed, on all hands, that he possessed no science superior to that of his age, or no nautical means that were not known to other mariners before him.

Moreover, his life justifies, in advance, the Papacy from the accusations brought against it by encyclopædists, on the

sion shall then devolve to the nearest relation, being a man of *legitimate birth*. . . . This entailed estate shall in nowise be inherited by a woman, except in case that no male is to be found, either in this or any other quarter of the world, of my real lineage, whose name, as well as that of his ancestors, shall have always been that of Columbus. In such an event (which may God forbend), then the female of *legitimate birth*, most nearly related to the preceding possessor of the estate, shall succeed to it. . . .” *

What now becomes of the assertion of Irving, that the connection of Columbus with Beatrix Enriquez was not sanctioned by matrimony? — B.

* See the Will *in extenso* in Irving's *Life of Columbus*, and in T. D. McGee's *Catholic History of America*, published by Donahoe, of Boston.